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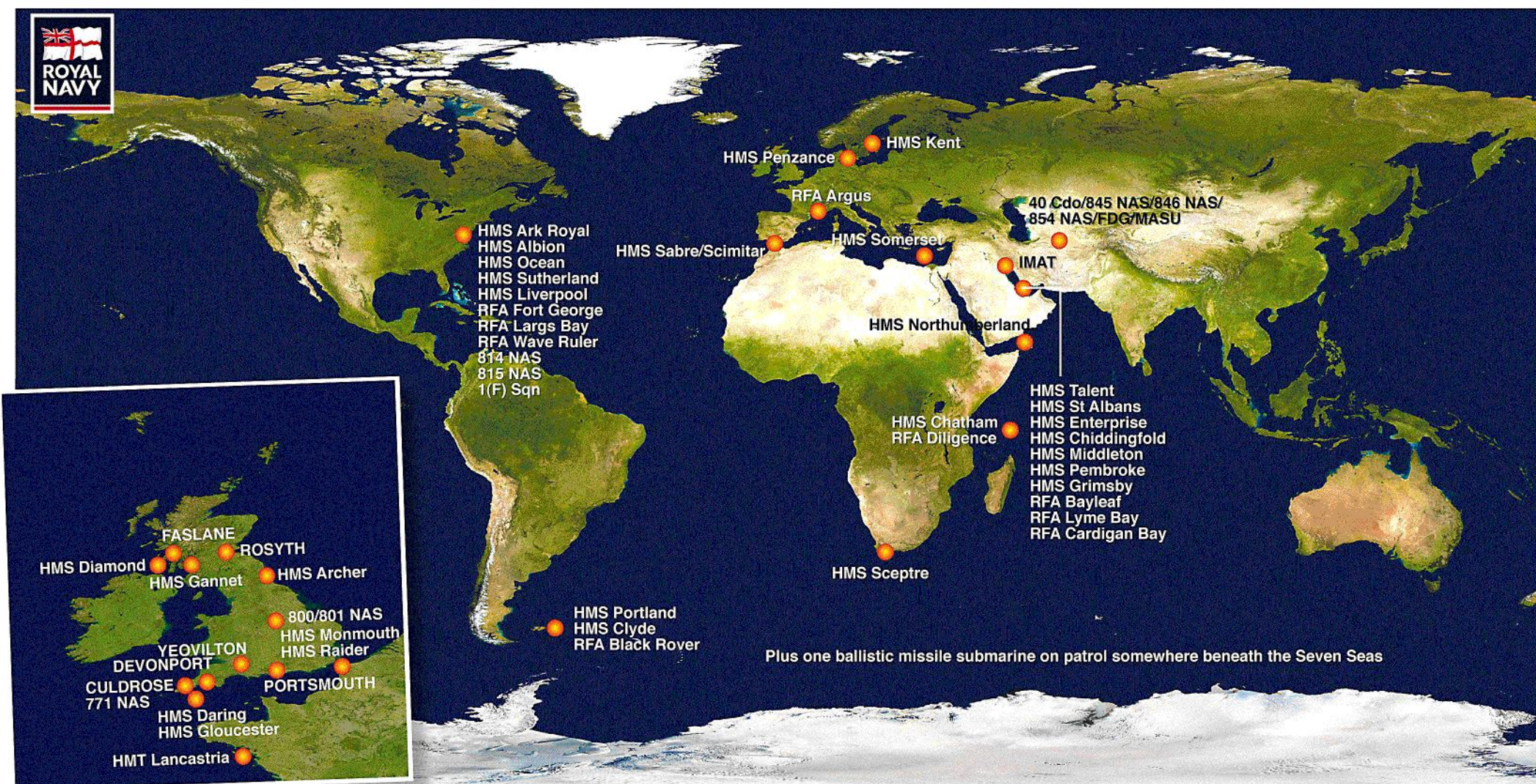
**40 COMMANDO
IN HELMAND**

CATCH THE NEW WAVE

Britain's most advanced warship HMS Daring leads her predecessor HMS Gloucester and HMS Cumberland as she undergoes Operational Sea Training for the first time. See pages 24-25

Picture: LA(Phot) James Crawford, FRPU West





Fleet Focus

IT HAS been a month of bitter sacrifice for the men of **40 Commando** (see page 7) around Sangin in Helmand province, tempered by progress made by the green berets (see pages 8-9).

With the bulk of media focus on operations in Afghanistan, it is easy to forget about the RN's constant commitment to stability in Iraq.

HMS St Albans is currently patrolling the country's oil platforms, but she broke away from that duty briefly to exercise with Kuwait's armed forces (see page 10).

The Saint's time in the northern Gulf is coming to a close; she'll soon be replaced by **HMS Somerset** which is making her way east – practising for the demanding conditions she'll face in the region in high summer (see opposite).

But for **HMS Atherstone** it's Gulf no more as the minehunter's 2½ year stint in Bahrain came to a close (see right).

Also home in Pompey is **HMS York**, who has completed her six-month tour of duty around the Falklands (see page 4)...

...while **HMS Portland** is getting to grips with that task (see page 6) and paying her respects at the monuments to the men of 1982 (see page 22).

In the North Atlantic, the Auriga task force – **HMS Ark Royal**, **Sutherland**, **Liverpool** and **RFA Fort George** – has been joined on the other side of the Atlantic by the amphibious element of the group – **HMS Albion**, **Ocean** and **RFA Largs Bay**. There's news from the carrier strike group on pages 20-21, from Albion on page 5 and Ocean on page 13 (aside from Auriga, the latter's also hosted her sponsor, Her Majesty the Queen).

The war against pirates east of Suez was temporarily halted as **HMS Chatham** sailed into the teeth of a cyclone to save all 23 crew on a foundering car transporter (see page 5).

Scores of sailors and airmen – including elements of **847** and **848 NAS** – were on hand on Dartmoor for the 50th anniversary of the Ten Tors challenge in case walkers got into difficulty (see page 18).

The 60th anniversary year of **RMR Merseyside** closed with the green beret reservists being granted the Freedom of Liverpool (see page 22).

HMS Raider and **HMS Monmouth** escorted the 'Little Ships' to Dunkirk for 70th anniversary commemorations of the 1940 evacuation from the continent (see page 11).

Talking of 70th anniversaries, Raider's sister **HMS Archer** was taking part in events to mark Charles de Gaulle's appeal to Frenchmen after the fall of his native land; before that she sailed to Newcastle for Operational Sea Training (see page 15).

Which brings us neatly on to **HMS Gloucester** which had a rip-roaring time at OST (see page 17) and **HMS Daring** which passed through the Navy's 'MOT' team for the first time (see the centre pages).

Daring's sister **HMS Dauntless** is now formally commissioned into the Fleet, while the third Type 45 destroyer, **HMS Diamond**, has completed her sea trials and is gearing up for her inaugural entry to Portsmouth (see page 23).

And at the opposite end of the age spectrum, Britain's oldest active warship, **HMS Sceptre**, has completed her final deployment, bringing the curtain down on nearly four decades' service by submarines of the Swiftsure class (see page 4).

Also on the subject of final deployments, **HMS Walney** has returned to Faslane following her five-month stint with a NATO mine warfare force; her place has been taken by her sister **HMS Penzance** (see page 6).

All these operations – and more – are directed by the team at **Fleet Operations** in Northwood. We take a look behind the scenes on page 28.

Crazy day for the Crazy A

DAD's home... A youngster plays with his father's medal while his brother clings on to the senior rating as **HMS Atherstone's** Gulf odyssey ends.

After more than two years in Bahrain, how fitting there was Gulf weather to greet the ship on her return to the UK.

Well, 20°C and sunshine mixed with clouds – but that's about as good as you'll get in the Solent in the spring.

There were 150 family members waiting for the 45 or so ship's company of the **Crazy A** in Portsmouth. Also on hand to welcome Atherstone home were sailors from her sister ships **Cattistock**, **Quorn** and **Hurworth**.

The latter have all served aboard Atherstone – or possibly her sister **Chiddingfold** – as part of the rotation of Hunt-class crews in the Gulf to maintain the constant RN minehunting presence. Five crews have passed through the **Crazy A** since the ship left Portsmouth at the beginning of 2008.

Four mine warfare vessels are based in Bahrain – two Hunts and two Sandowns – working with Gulf navies to foster closer relations and honing minehunting skills in a particularly challenging environment.

Bahrain to Blighty is a long way (6,500 miles roughly) and the endurance of a Hunt class is relatively limited, so there were stops on the return journey in Oman and Djibouti and longer visits to Malta and Alicante.

The last crew to take charge of Atherstone for the stint in the Gulf and the homeward journey were the longest serving of the five ship's companies to embark during the ship's protracted deployment.

"We're proud to have achieved so much and to have overcome so many challenges," said CO Lt Cdr Gordon Ruddock.

"The deployment to the Gulf and the return to the UK is testament to the resilience of even the smallest ships of the Royal Navy and our continued ability to deploy, sustain and recover units all over the world."

HMS Chiddingfold is still in the Gulf, while Atherstone's place has been taken by **HMS Middleton**.

Picture: LA(Phot) Dave Jenkins, FRPU East



THERE are probably easier ways to get on board Her Majesty's Ship Somerset.

But they're certainly not as exciting as Mne Guy Lawson rapid roping on to the frigate's flight deck as she makes her way east towards 'Pirate Alley'.

The Type 23 is bound for the tip of the Gulf to relieve her sister St Albans (see page 10).

But on the way to her patrol zone around Iraq's oil platforms, there's considerable maritime security work to perform...

...which is why the green beret – part of Somerset's bespoke boarding party – is dropping out of the ship's Lynx.

Somerset sails east after receiving a 'very satisfactory' report from the Flag Officer Sea Training ('satisfactory' is a pass...) following a period of extensive training which culminated in the 23 losing her Seawolf air defence missiles at drone targets.

The first break for the ship's company came in Gibraltar where 31 sailors participated in the traditional Rock Race.

PO(ET)ME Steve Wilmshire won the 2.7-mile race (rising 1,300ft from the naval base to the top of one of the Pillars of Hercules) in an impressive time of 22m 55s.

On sailing from Gib, the ship exercised with the zippy (technical term) boats of Gibraltar Squadron, practising her ability to counter fast attack craft.

Next was an anti-submarine warfare exercise with the USS Harry S Truman Carrier Battle Group, which allowed the Brits to show off the potency of their Sonar 2087... and watch some impressive jet activity involving the Truman.

Somerset was sent into the Mediterranean ahead of the 100,000-ton leviathan to scout for the presence of an 'enemy' boat – and neutralise if necessary.

No longer do warships simply sail from A to B 'on passage'; these days it's about Maritime Security Operations.

In the Med, that means Operation Active Endeavour – checking on passing shipping to ensure everything is above board – as Somerset made for the NATO ranges in Crete for final checks and assessments of the frigate's weapons and sensors.

Just to keep the 180-plus sailors and Royal Marines on their toes, there's also been plenty of CBRNDC – not a town in Wales but Chemical Biological Radiological Nuclear and Damage Control – exercises, gunnery and oil platform protection tests (minus the oil platforms).

The chemical warfare drills saw sailors donning (and subsequently 'undoning') special NBCD suits – less-than-pleasant attire in warm climes – and respirators and digging out combo pens and NAPS tablets (used to counter the effects of chemical weapons).

All of which brings us to just about now (ie the beginning of July) and the entry into pirate-infested waters around the Horn of Africa and the International Transit Corridor off Yemen.

That means a fair deal of boarding and searching by Somerset's, er, board and search teams on Operation Calash (similar mission to Active Endeavour, different waters).

"As we are about to enter the joint operating area, my ship's company are well prepared for – and looking forward to – the challenges that lie ahead," said Somerset's Commanding Officer, Cdr Andrew Burns.

"We are confident that we can deliver every aspect of our mission to a high standard, contribute to security in the Middle East and maintain the strong reputation of the UK and Royal Navy in the region."



picture: la[phot] jenny lodge, frpu east

Just dropping a line...



Get-go York home

IN WEATHER which you might call Falklands-esque (cool, overcast, breezy), HMS York brought the curtain down on a six-month deployment.

Mercifully, it's not been all grey for the veteran destroyer during her half-year patrolling Britain's South Atlantic possessions.

No, there was white too (snow in South Georgia). And sandy (beaches of Brazil). Even a little green (Cape Verde Islands).

The core of the six months away from Portsmouth was devoted to providing reassurance to the 3,000 or so Falklanders of Britain's commitment to them – particularly germane given recent tensions in the South Atlantic.

The ship took part in exercises with her affiliated Army unit, the Yorkshire Regiment, firing 100 rounds of high explosive ordnance from her 4.5in 'Kryten' gun (plus another 900 rounds of non-HE shells) and worked with RAF Typhoon jets to hone her air defence skills.

CO Cdr Simon Staley said Team York had "succeeded on all counts" whether it was working with the other Services or visiting the furthest-flung parts of the old empire (the destroyer paid a rare visit to the extremely remote South Sandwich Islands; she wasn't able to put sailors ashore courtesy of the weather, but she did race past flying the White Ensign).

"My ship's company has been focused on our mission from the get go," Cdr Staley added. "They've been utterly professional, consistently resourceful – and determined to retain the sense of humour synonymous with the Senior Service."

Among the men and women who'd succeeded on all counts was CPO Dennis Nolan, welcomed home by his wife Teresa and sons Will, five, and two-year-old Zac.

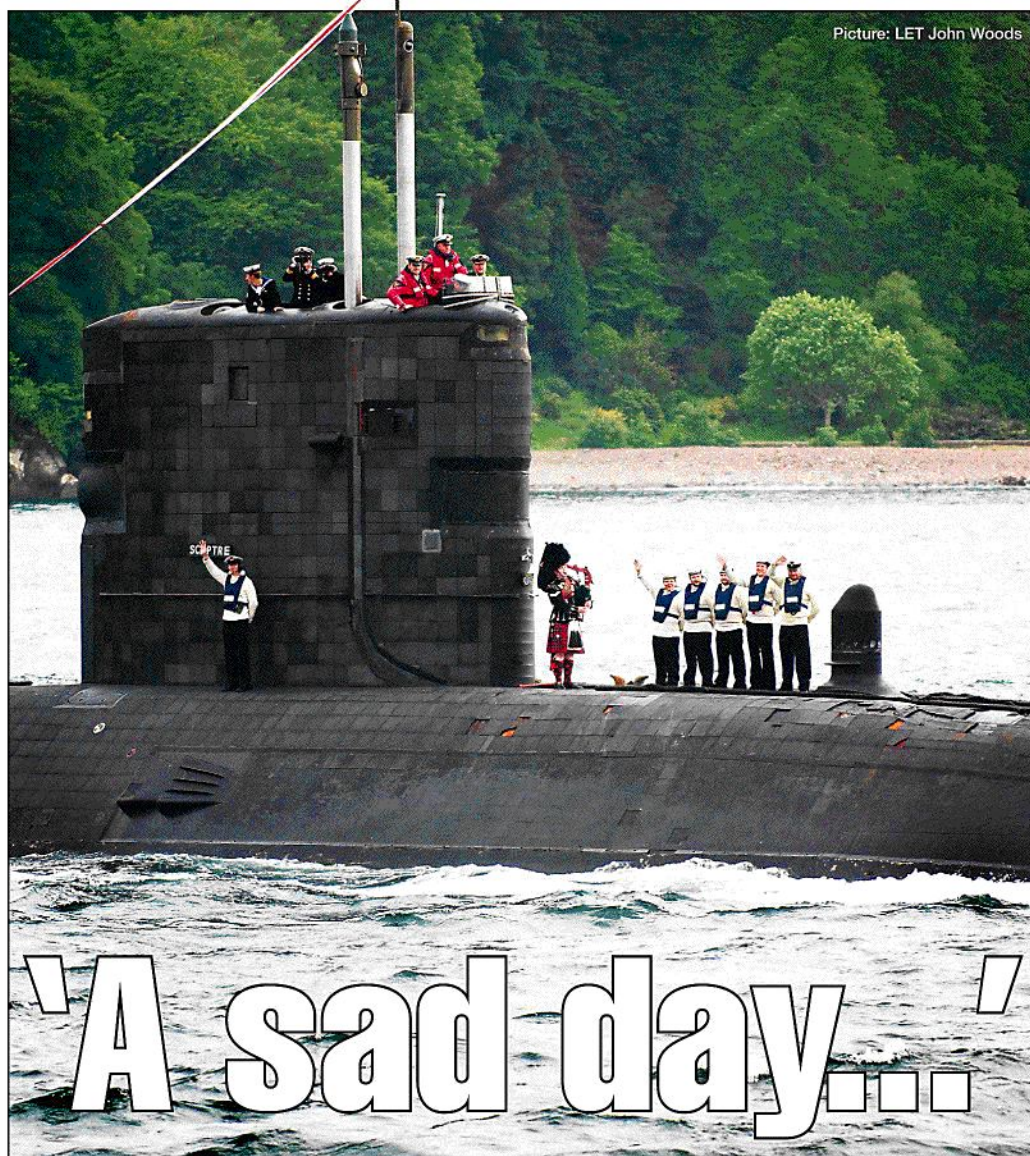
After two decades' service, this was the senior rating's final deployment; he'll spend the final three years of his RN career in shore-based posts.

"Patrolling the South Atlantic has definitely seen me end this side of my career on a high," he said.

"It's been extremely challenging – especially working within the operational theatre of the Falkland Islands. We had to make sure that we did a decent job by providing a strong mix of reassurance and deterrence."



Picture: PO(AWT) Dutchy Holland, HMS York



Picture: LET John Woods

TO THE strains of *Scotland the Brave* on bagpipe, the very last of a breed of Cold War warriors ended her active career on a spring afternoon in Devon.

The final act of 32 years of service by HMS Sceptre – the last Swiftsure-class nuclear submarine on active duties – was an eight-month deployment east of Suez, in the Indian and Atlantic Oceans which added 31,000 miles to her odometer.

That deployment began in her home base of Faslane. It ended in Devonport, where the boat now enters extended readiness until she formally decommissions in December.

Some 170 loved ones made the long trek from the Clyde to the Hamoaze to welcome Sceptre home one last time.

They witnessed the submarine's long decommissioning pennant barely moving in the light breeze, as tugs Adept and Forceful gently nudged Sceptre alongside.

They waited as eight men and the casing officer, all dressed in traditional submariner's sweaters, ensured the boat was secured.

Among those witnessing the end of the final deployment was the man who led her on her first tour of duty 32 years ago.

Cdr Rob Forsythe watched Sceptre being launched in 1976 and took her to sea in 1978 "when the Cold War was very hot".

"There was a constant feeling of excitement – there was always something exciting going on.

"Sceptre was a well-built boat, she always ran well. It was technologically challenging, but also interesting and fun. At the time, she was the bee's knees."

The boat, says her first CO, has been around for half his lifetime – and he has followed her progress.

"I was on board a couple of years ago with the

XO. The electronics have changed, of course, but we reckoned we could still take her to sea," Cdr Forsythe added.

The last in a long line of commanding officers which began with Cdr Forsythe is Cdr Steve Waller, CO for the past two and a half years; he also served as her executive officer a decade ago.

"This is the end of the era of S-boats. It's a sad day for the submarine community, but we have signed off with a flourish having successfully completed a long and demanding worldwide deployment.

"Sceptre has proven how well submarines that began life as archetypal Cold War warriors have adapted to today's needs."

Six Swiftsure boats were built for the Royal Navy between the end of the 1960s and beginning of the 1980s, at a total cost to the taxpayer of more than £330m. Swiftsure herself bowed out in 1992. The rest of the class were paid off during the first decade of the 21st Century.

And now Sceptre joins them. There is only so long you can run a 32-year-old warship, however – not least because many of the firms which produced parts for her originally no longer exist.

"It's a crying shame that she's going," said Chef 'Del' Trotter, who's served on four S-boats. "You have to work that little bit harder because Sceptre's an old boat, but she's a graceful old lady, a Cold War warrior sent around the world."

"On S-boats you're out making a difference, doing something which affects the world. Six months after the patrol you'll see something on the news and realise it's a direct result of the information you gathered."

For the next six months, the boat will be kept ticking over in case she's needed; if she's not, she'll remain alongside until formally decommissioning to join other out-of-service boats in Devonport.



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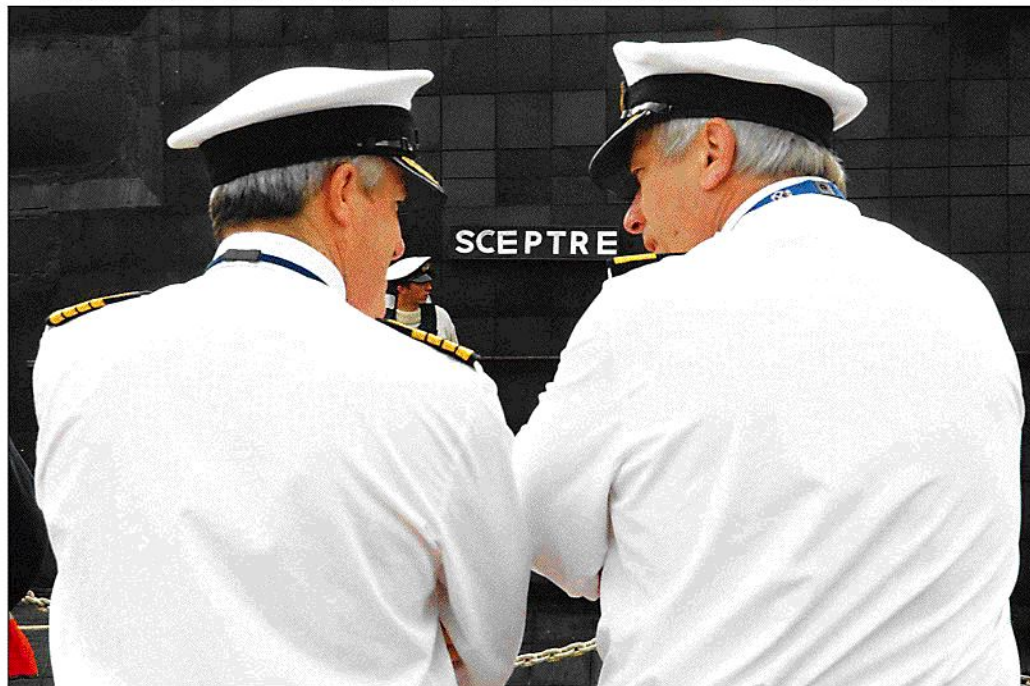
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● Farewell old friend... Capt John Edgell, Captain (SM) Devonport Flotilla, and Cdre Jon Westbrook, Commodore Faslane Flotilla, discuss Sceptre's passing

Picture: LA(Phot) Claire Jones, FRPU West

Chefs return but dusties not binned

AFTER six years some of the most unpopular Naval titles are being axed – having been given a resounding thumbs down by the men and women who bear them.

Chefs are once again chefs, stewards stewards and writers, well you guessed it.

When ratings branches underwent a thorough overhaul back in 2004 and the Logistics Branch was formed – reflecting the changes to the daily life and qualifications of thousands of sailors – new titles were also introduced.

Everyone in the branch became logisticians. Chefs became Logisticians (Catering Services (Preparation)), stewards Logisticians (Catering Services (Delivery)) and Writers Logisticians (Personnel).

And the new titles have not been popular – or as a spokesman for the RN's personnel arm put it "the revised forms of address and specialist titles have not been welcomed so warmly".

Indeed, sailors have struggled to get used to the new titles in day-to-day life at sea and ashore... and struggled to make brief pipes (and regular *Navy News* readers may have noticed the odd swipe at the cumbersome titles...).

So after holding extensive consultation with junior and senior members of the RN logistics branch, Second Sea Lord Vice Admiral Sir Alan Massey has agreed to two significant changes:

- titles such as writer, chef and steward are being formally reintroduced at the junior rate level (e.g. Logistician (Chef) Smith); for senior rates, the catering services title is being resurrected (e.g. PO Logistician (Catering Services) Smith).

- in everyday usage such as pipes and addressing shipmates, the title Logistician will be dropped in favour of Chef Smith, Steward Jones, Writer Bloggs. For senior rates, it'll be PO Caterer Smith, Chief Writer Bloggs.

However, not all the title changes introduced in 2004 are going. Jack Dusties rather like their Logistician (Supply Chain) title – instead of the former Stores Accountant – so it is being retained, but in everyday use Logistician (Supply Chain) Smith will be referred to as SC Smith, rather than Logs/Logistician Smith.

See 2-6 (page 34) for details, or Galaxy 2010-10.

Toul time for Argus

IT MUST be nice to be in the South of France at this time of year.

Just ask the crew of RFA Argus who took their ship to Toulon with two Merlins from 829 Naval Air Squadron in Culdrose.

The aviation training ship/primary casualty receiving facility (she can cope with 100 wounded/injured personnel in a state-of-the-art hospital suite) made for the Med to take part in the 100th birthday of *l'aviation navale* – the French Fleet Air Arm, which is one year younger than its RN ally.

Argus served as an air control platform for displays over the home of France's Mediterranean Fleet as well as providing support for the two 829 whirlybirds.

The Culdrose fliers were joined in Toulon skies by the Black Cats, whose two Lynx performed their trademark display, set to be seen at 20 air shows this summer.

The visit to the South of France was the first act of a six-month deployment for Argus, which has recently emerged from a £23m refit. She'll shortly be embarking RN medics for an exercise making use of her hospital facilities.

Chatham's Lynx over the Moon

THESE are the final moments of the vehicle transporter MV Dubai Moon – after all 23 crew had been carried to safety by the Lynx of HMS Chatham, despite the raging cyclone.

The frigate picked up an SOS from the merchantman off the Horn of Africa as she struggled in Force 10 winds.

As the Type 22 covered the 175 miles of ocean to reach the Dubai Moon's last-reported location, the storm worsened – it was officially re-classified as a tropical cyclone – as did the transporter's plight.

Her cargo of vehicles shifted, she became unstable and began to list heavily.

The ship drifted ever-closer to the island of Abd Al Kuri, but the skill of her master managed to prevent Dubai Moon running aground.

Due to the uncharted nature of these shallow waters Chatham was unable to follow and had to battle through the cyclone to skirt around the island to the north.

By now, the Dubai Moon's skipper Hassan Madar was becoming increasingly desperate. The cyclone was pushing his ship towards another island, Jazirat Samhah. As a last act, he dropped her anchors. Although they did not take permanent hold, they prevented the transporter being dashed on a coral reef.

By the time Chatham was within range of the foundering vessel, the storm was abating slightly – enough at least to launch her 815 NAS Lynx for a rescue mission.

When flight commander and pilot Lt Pete Higgins arrived on the scene, he lowered winchman AET Richard Wilmot on to the severely-listing deck.

The 21-year-old rating found the deck was like an ice rink from the mixture of oil and seawater swirling around.

He managed to stand up holding on to a rail and began to brief one of the Dubai Moon's crew when he slipped. His winchwire stopped him hurtling into the sea.

The rating was lowered for a second attempt, hauling himself along the deck using a rope the sailors had fixed to the guardrail.

After rescuing one crewman, the exhausted winchman was violently ill – the exertions of the rescue plus 36 hours of ploughing through the storm. There was no way he could continue.

Luckily, Chatham was hosting a visiting team of aviation inspectors, including qualified Lynx crewman Lt Cdr Graham Chesterman.

After being briefed by the ill AET Wilmot, he took over winchman duties.

"The first lift was interesting as I realised just how slippery the deck was – and how sporty it was going to be," he said.

"I soon got into the routine of landing on my bottom or back, depending on how the ship was rolling."

For nearly four hours, the Lynx crew struggled to lift the Dubai Moon sailors to safety; some of the latter were beginning to panic.

"We got all 23 off the ship without losing anyone," said Lt Cdr Chesterman. "Sitting in the back of the aircraft with the guys we had just lifted and seeing their relieved, smiling faces made it so worthwhile."

Lt Higgins added: "The combination of weather conditions at the very edge of our operating limits, excessive ship roll and a very slippery deck covered in oil made this a very challenging rescue operation, especially for the winchman."

Safely aboard Chatham, Capt Madar, Dubai Moon's Ethiopian master, was fulsome in his praise for the Britons.

"If we were not rescued by the Royal Navy we all would have perished with my ship," he said.

"They were the only people to respond to our distress call; we owe them our lives."

"Normally we operate close to the coast, but we had to go far out to sea to avoid the pirates. That meant we could not find shelter from the storm."

Ah yes, the pirates. Chatham is here as flagship of NATO's Standing Maritime Group 2 which is trying to enforce the rule of law off the Horn of Africa.

At the height of those operations (and long after the cyclone had died out thankfully) Britain's second most senior sailor – Commander-in-Chief Fleet, Admiral Sir Trevor Soar – jumped aboard.

In between formal briefings from Cdre Steve Chick, the RN commander of the NATO group, and CO Cdr Simon Huntington and his team, Admiral Soar witnessed a night-time small arms shoot... and took the opportunity to fire a number of the weapons himself.

On the admiral's final day with 'Up and at 'em', a Japanese Navy aircraft detected a dhow towing two smaller skiffs in the Internationally Recommended Transit Corridor (IRTC) – the invisible 'safety box' where Allied navies do their utmost to protect shipping.

A dhow accompanied by two skiffs is often the modus operandi of Somali pirates.

In this case, it was a fishing dhow lawfully going about its trade. An RN/RM boarding team was dispatched on an 'assurance visit' to explain the work of the Allied navies in the region.

"During Chatham's time in the area piracy has been significantly reduced in the Gulf of Aden and operations continue to disrupt piracy in the Somali Basin," said Admiral Soar.

"It has been a privilege to visit Chatham on operations and to witness first-hand the effectiveness of counter-piracy efforts and regional engagement in the area of operations."

● CINC Fleet Admiral Sir Trevor Soar accompanies Chatham's RN/RM boarding team on an assurance patrol in the Gulf of Aden Pictures: PO(Phot) Owen King, RN Photographer of the Year



● A replenishment at sea of ammunition on HMS Albion

Ammunition drop for Albion gunners

AN 847 NAS Lynx made quick work of bringing several tons of ammunition to assault ship HMS Albion from RFA Largs Bay.

The two ships are part of the Auriga amphibious task group, journeying across the Atlantic to visit our American cousins.

And the ammunition? Well, that means that the 105mm light guns of 29 Commando Royal Artillery, normally based in The Citadel at Plymouth, will be bringing their power to bear on the ranges in Camp Lejeune in Virginia.

The Amphibious Task Group set out some weeks later than the Carrier Strike Group, led by HMS Ark Royal, which is already at work off the US coast.

But the men and women of Albion were determined to make good use of their crossing time, running exercises and competitions to sharpen their maritime skills and keep up the tempo of their training before launching into the main exercises once they reach America.

Sailors and Marines also joined

to mark the death of Mne Scott Taylor from Taunton-based 40 Commando who was one of the fierce toll of deaths in Afghanistan in the month of June.

Albion's Cdr Geoff Wintle said: "It has been a largely uneventful crossing of the Atlantic but it has given the battle staff from Commander Amphibious Task Group and 3 Commando Brigade RM time to get their headquarters integrated within the ships."

"The embarked forces have been conducting training and getting their kit and vehicles ready for what will be a demanding exercise, both ashore and afloat."

"While we are still many miles from the Carrier Group, led by Ark Royal, we have started to coordinate plans and processes ready for when we meet up in a couple of weeks time."

"In short, we are ready for the exercise and looking forward to working as a large UK Task Group for the first time in several years."

■ See pages 13 and 20-21 for more from Auriga

Crumbs, ten years have flown by...

THERE's cake aplenty on HMS Kent.

Let us re-phrase that.

There was cake aplenty on HMS Kent... but it's all been scoffed.

It is ten years since the Type 23 was commissioned – number 14 of a class of 16 (although three have subsequently paid off).

Back at the original commissioning – June 8 2000 – the weather was scorching and Kent was known as the 'Millennium Frigate' (because she entered service in the new millennium...).

Ten years to the day, the weather wasn't scorching and Kent's simply known as, er, Kent. Still, there was cake.

The entire ship's company gathered on the flight deck with the ship alongside in Portsmouth Naval Base.

And there Cdr Nick Cooke-Priest performed the honours, cutting into a birthday cake with his youngest sailor, AB Brown.

"It's an unparalleled honour to be in command of one of Her Majesty's warships, but it is even more memorable when you are the captain for special occasions such as Kent's tenth birthday," said Cdr Cooke-Priest.

As things stand there'll be 20th and 30th birthday parties for the Type 23; she's due to remain in service until 2034.

As for the more imminent future, the ship was in Sweden as Navy News went to press promoting ties between the UK and the Scandinavian nation, before heading for Cardiff to take part in national Armed Forces Day celebrations.

We'll have more from Kent in next month's paper.

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Picture: LA/Photo Simmo Simpson

It certainly is Stanley...

NOW a six-month deployment to the Falklands in the depths of the austral winter might not be everyone's cup of tea...

... but HMS Portland's ET(ME) Legetta is jumping for joy on the steps leading up to Stanley's famous whalebone arch. Either that, or he's trying to keep warm.

For the first time since arriving in the South Atlantic, the Type 23's ship's company have visited the islands' capital.

The ship anchored in Port William Sound for four days and, weather permitting, ferried sailors ashore.

Some made a beeline for some of Stanley's sights (Christ Church Cathedral, the museum, gift shops, war memorials to the battles of 1914 and 1982, the odd hostelry).

Others fancied a spot of sporting action: Portland's golf team took on Stanley Golf Club – played on a course described by the ship's team captain CPO Les Willcock as "unique" in conditions which were "very blustery" (not entirely uncommon in the Falklands...).

The more adventurous Portlanders made for Mount Harriet – scene of fierce fighting between 42 Commando and Argentine forces in the closing stages of the 1982 conflict.

The toughest challenge today's generation faced was abseiling down the mountain face as part of team-building organised by the Hillside Adventurous Training Centre in Stanley.

Meanwhile, back on board the frigate, those sailors not ashore were explaining to Falkland Island leaders what a Type 23 brings when it comes to safeguarding Britain's South Atlantic possessions.

23s are infrequent visitors to these parts (typically, though not exclusively, the role of South Atlantic patrol ship falls to veteran Type 42 destroyers), so CO Mike Knott and his team gave the islands' chief executive, senior magistrate and senior policeman (the latter is also head of the prison service... fire service... customs... emergency planning... security... and defence force) a tour of the warship and capability demonstration.

Portland sailed the following Monday and embarked the Commander British Forces South Atlantic Islands Cdre Phillip Thicknesse. The commodore met a large cross section of the ship's company and was given a demonstration of the capability Portland brings to existing military assets in the Falklands.

Almost immediately after arriving, the Type 23 was in the thick of the fight, taking part in war games with the Falklands' constant naval guardian, HMS Clyde, plus the Roulemont Infantry Company (Kings Royal Hussars), 148 Battery and an RAF Hercules.

The battery provided naval gunfire support officers and spotters ashore to coordinate rounds hurtling out of Portland's 4.5in main gun.

With the 'enemy' subdued, the infantry stormed ashore via sea boats from Clyde plus a landing craft from 460 Port and Maritime Troop to secure a beachhead and advance in land.

As for the Herc, it and maritime reconnaissance aircraft based in the Falklands worked with the Type 23 as she was subjected to a simulated air, sea and submarine attack on ships in Falkland Sound.

■ Portland pays her respects, page 22

Gdynia to join us

ON THE left is Her Majesty's Ship Penzance. On the right is Her Majesty's Ship Walney. The 'stunning' background is provided by the Polish port of Gdynia.

It was the duty of the ship on the left to replace the ship on the right as Walney handed over duties with NATO's Standing Mine Counter-Measures Group 1 to her sister from Faslane.

Walney – earmarked for paying off this year – was asked to join the NATO force at short notice and plug a gap...

... which she did with aplomb for five months according to the group's Polish commander, Cdr Krzysztof Rybak, taking part in four operations and three exercises in three seas (North, Baltic and English Channel).

Cdr Rybak personally thanked Lt Cdr Des Donworth and the men of Walney before they departed for the waters of the Clyde.

Where she received a rapturous welcome from friends and family, to the sound of the Band of the Royal Marines Scotland playing Rod Stewart's *Sailing*.

Walney's summons to action for the 139-day deployment came at short notice when a sister ship had engine problems.

Lt Graham Boulton, Walney's Ops Officer, said: "Every one of the ship's company worked flat out to get the vessel ready."

"If I had to sum up the challenges of the deployment then I would say that they were three-fold.

"First there was the engineering challenge – our marine engineers worked extremely hard to keep the ship operational and really did an amazing job of keeping her running.

"Secondly there was the matter of the short notice, and the crew played a blinder to get us the stores we needed to go to sea.

"The third challenge was coping with being away from our families."



Among the families waiting on the jetty were seven members of one family, waiting for AB Sam Sheppard, the youngest sailor on board.

Mum Jane said: "It's difficult being away from Sam for such a long period, but his grandad was ex-Navy so it must be in his blood."

"He's my boy and I always miss him, and as youngest on the ship you can't help but worry."

She added: "But it's a job he adores and he wouldn't change it for the world."

"It brings a tear to your eye to see him in uniform."

Once Walney had turned her nose homewards, it was time for Penzance to step up to the mark on Baltops (a contraction of Baltic Operations).

That saw the small minehunting task group joined by elements of the US Sixth Fleet, plus military firepower from Germany, Latvia,

Estonia, Lithuania, Denmark, Poland, France, Sweden and Russia.

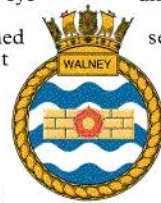
Baltops proved to be a real pot pourri of naval warfare – air defence, surface defence, force protection and mine warfare training.

The ships made for Hara Bay, about 30 miles east of Tallinn, and once the home of the Red Navy when Estonia was under Soviet rule.

There Penzance and her fellow minehunters were charged with clearing the way for an amphibious landing by searching the bay for underwater explosives.

The NATO group found several live underwater explosive devices which were destroyed with the assistance of the Estonian Navy.

Germany's FGS Rottweil also deal with a TMB-2 – a Soviet WW2 anti-tank mine – which somehow found its way into Gulf of Finland waters.



Service pay frozen following Budget

THE announcement in late June by Chancellor George Osborne of the new government's first Budget included a freeze on pay for public sector workers over the next two years – and this paralysis of pay will also affect Service personnel.

The decision of a two-per cent rise from the 2010/11 award of the Armed Forces Pay Review Body is unaffected.

The MOD will be working closely with the AFPRB over future developments and charges such as food and accommodation.

Anyone earning £21,000 or

less will still receive a pay rise of at least £250 over the two-year hiatus.

The doubling of the Operational Allowance remains to recognise the work of the men and women of all three Services working in front-line theatres.

The freeze on public sector pay is one of a raft of measures being introduced in what has been dubbed 'the Austerity Budget'.

The Government has described its stance as "tough but fair", and a decisive move to tackle Britain's record debts.

Belfast celebrates new Naval link

AFTER the honour of shepherding the little ships in the waters off Dunkirk (see page 11), HMS Monmouth made for Belfast and the city's maritime festival.

The crux of the event in Northern Ireland's one-time shipbuilding centre was the celebration of the city's ties with Britain's newest warship.

D37 – HMS Duncan for those who don't speak pennant numbers – will be affiliated with Belfast once she's launched later this year.

As with all the Type 45 destroyers, Duncan will be bound with two cities; Dundee was confirmed last year, the RN and Belfast civic leaders used the maritime festival to announce the second tie.

The celebration of the new link

was cemented by an official lunch and evening reception onboard Monmouth for senior Northern Irish and military figures.

Although the Black Duke's visit to Belfast was largely a formal affair, the Type 23 frigate's ship's company got ashore for fun, frolics and er, footie. Monmouth's football team took on the Police Service of Northern Ireland, while those nautically-minded made for Newtownards Sailing Club.

Back on board, the gangway was opened to visitors, plus groups of schoolchildren and local organisations – in all more than 1,000 people visited over the weekend of the festival.

With ceremonial duties now done, Monmouth has resumed her more typical role. She's presently hosting trainee navigators.

Strike it unlucky

LIGHTNING never strikes twice, so the saying goes.

But what about thrice if you're HMS Gannet? In one day? Barely one mile apart?

Britain's busiest Search and Rescue unit found itself called to three lightning strikes in an afternoon as the Lake District was battered by a ferocious summer storm.

A Sea King from the Prestwick-based unit was already bound for the Lakes to pick up someone with a shoulder injury when it was diverted to deal with the first strike victim.

He had been walking at Lad Hows, between Keswick and Buttermere, when he was struck repeatedly by lightning.

Keswick Mountain Rescue team reached the casualty and determined he needed airlifting off the hillside. The SAR fliers duly obliged.

Barely had the injured walker been collected than the Sea King picked up a new task: two ramblers had been struck by lightning barely a mile away on Crag Hill.

They too were picked up, plus a third uninjured walker, and taken with casualty number one to an ambulance waiting in nearby Buttermere.

And then the radio crackled into life again. Another rescue, this time on Whiteless Pike, just above Buttermere. Once again the casualty was safely picked up and handed over to the medical authorities.

And lest we forget the unfortunate person with the shoulder injury... the Sea King resumed its original tasking, collected the casualty and ferried him to hospital.

"The weather conditions were very tricky – each time we arrived on the scene, we weren't really sure what we were going to find," said observer Lt Tim Barker.

"It all went well – even if it was a little on the scary side at times."

Meanwhile in Cornwall, Gannet's sister rescuers, 771 NAS, accomplished two of the fastest life-saving sorties in the squadron's proud history – and again in the space of 24 hours.

The Sea King was scrambled to rescue a sportsman who suffered a heart attack at Helston Cricket Club – just a mile from Cudrose.

Within 13 minutes of the call coming into 771, the casualty had been landed at Royal Cornwall Hospital in Trerise, 14 miles away... well within the crucial 'golden hour' stressed by doctors.

The following morning the same crew were airborne for a second 'medivac' (medical evacuation) – another heart-attack victim, this time a German holidaymaker in Coverack.

"To speed up the transfer and aid the patient's chances, we landed the Sea King in the garden right in front of the bed and breakfast – which certainly woke up any of the guests who were still asleep," said aircraft commander and pilot Lt Cdr Martin Shepherd.

The tourist was ferried to the same hospital, this time in 18 minutes.

■ PLANS to replace the red-grey Sea King as part of a fundamental overhaul of Search and Rescue provision around the UK have been put on ice by the government.

Chief Secretary to the Treasury Danny Alexander mothballed or cancelled billions of pounds of projects which his department decided were unaffordable, did not represent good value for money, or where it did not reflect the government's priorities.

A consortium, Soteria, was due to take over all helicopter rescue duties in the UK by 2016 in a £6bn revamp of SAR services.

Naval and RAF aviators would still fly rescue missions, but operate alongside civilian aircrew in non-military Sikorski S92A helicopters.

Mr Alexander told Parliament that the replacement SAR helicopter project would be reviewed as a matter of urgency.



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Fathers. Sons. Brothers. Royals.

IT HAS been a bitter month of sacrifice for the Royal Marines of 40 Commando in Afghanistan.

Insurgents have claimed the lives of six green berets – all but one killed by bomb blasts.

Cpl Stephen Walker was killed in an explosion near Patrol Base Almas in Sangin while he was on a foot patrol with Afghan troops.

Originally from Lisburn in Northern Ireland, Cpl Walker joined the RN as a cook in 1986 before transferring to the Corps in 1990.

The father-of-two had served in most branches of the Royal Marines in a career spanning two decades and was regarded as an expert in mortars and jungle warfare.

He was – in the words of 40 Cdo's CO Lt Col Paul James – "my most experienced and probably my best corporal. I valued his counsel greatly and despite being his commanding officer, he taught me tactics."

As for the ordinary ranks, they use words like 'legend', 'father figure', 'charismatic', 'life and soul of the party'.

"Never has a kinder man walked the planet," said Cpl Ash Morris, 1 Troop, Alpha Company.

"All that mattered to him were the things closest to his heart; his family and his loyal section of Marines."

Cpl Darren Davis of 3 Troop added: "Whisky Walker was such a huge character in the troop; words cannot do him justice. He oozed every quality that a bootneck should have – the complete package."

An explosion also claimed the life of **Cpl Stephen Curley**.

The 26-year-old section commander – and father of



● *Band of brothers... (l-r) Cpl Stephen Walker – 'the complete package'; Cpl Stephen Curley – 'an oracle and best friend'; Mne Anthony Hotine – 'always giving that little extra'; Mne Scott Taylor – 'positive attitude'; Mne Steven Birdsall – 'second-to-none'; Mne Richard Hollington – 'pure gold'*

a five-month-old son – had distinguished himself in Iraq and on his first tour of duty in Afghanistan.

He headed to Helmand with 40 this spring as a specialist in urban combat.

"A man of few but powerful words when it mattered, he lived by the motto 'If you're not living life on the edge, you're taking up too much room'. This will be forever imprinted on our hearts," said his widow Kirianne.

His comrades say 40 Commando is much the poorer for the loss of an outstanding role model and, above all, their 'closest brother'.

"Words cannot explain the immeasurable impact that Steve Curley has had, not just on the troop, but the whole of Charlie Company; he is irreplaceable," said Sgt Danny 'Smudger' Smith, troop sergeant 7 Troop.

"The men idolised him, he was their oracle and best friend. I have never met another man with such an amazing sense of humour; every bad situation could be made into a hilarious joke which of course meant he had a natural ability to pick the lads up when the chips were down."

Mne Scott Taylor was another victim of an improvised explosive device which detonated while on patrol around Sangin.

The 21-year-old from Buxton followed his brother Liam into the Corps and, after taking part in last year's Taurus deployment to the Far East, headed to Patrol Base Jamil with Alpha Company comrades.

"Scott Taylor was everything I needed in a bootneck," said Lt Col James. "Proud but not arrogant, loyal but still independent, courageous but not foolhardy, he was an outstanding marine."

That's an opinion echoed by his fellow Royals in the patrol base.

"If I could have had 30 guys like Scotty in the troop then I would have been a very happy man," said Sgt Danny Pea, commander of Patrol Base Jamil.

"Scotty was what we describe in the Corps as the 'Grey Man': the job was always done without hesitation and he would not normally stand out from the crowd, but this was the way he liked it, and I would not have wanted it any other way."

Mne Pete Carver added:

"Scotty was a true friend and one that no-one can replace. I even thought of him as a brother."

Mne Anthony 'Tino' Hotine, aged 21, from Warminster was killed by a bomb blast while on a security patrol with Afghan soldiers around Patrol Base Jamil.

Mne Hotine joined the Corps in 2007 and had already served on one operational tour in Sangin. He returned to Helmand as a specialist signaller, having qualified third on his course.

Colleagues describe him as quiet, cool and dedicated.

"He was always willing to give that little extra of himself, no matter what the price," said Maj Sean Brady, Officer Commanding Alpha Company.

"The concept of 'marching to the sound of the drums' may seem anachronistic in today's world; however it perfectly describes Tino's attitude to his job and to his life."

Sgt Pea added: "Tino was a keen soldier who always wanted to impress. His maturity was that of a 30-year-old man. Without doubt, Tino would have gone far in the Corps."

Mne Steven Birdsall – known by friends as Birdy – was

fatally wounded by a gunshot after coming under fire from insurgents while patrolling north of Sangin.

The 20-year-old from Warrington was a qualified HGV driver who took part in last year's Taurus deployment.

He served with Bravo Coy as a light machine-gunner and was helping Royal Engineers running a check point in Sangin when he was wounded.

Mne Birdsall was flown back to Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham but succumbed to his wounds the following day.

"Stevie brought enormous courage, humour and emotional support to his section; he laughed, larked and listened within the patrol base and was a centre of gravity for morale," said Maj Mark Totten, Officer Commanding Bravo Company.

Mne Olly Spence 11 Troop, Bravo Company, added: "Birdy was strong, full of heart and always worked hard for the team. As a light machine-gunner, his drills on the gun were as slick as his wet hair after a morning shower. As a mate he was second-to-none, he had an unparalleled sense of humour on, as well as off the job."

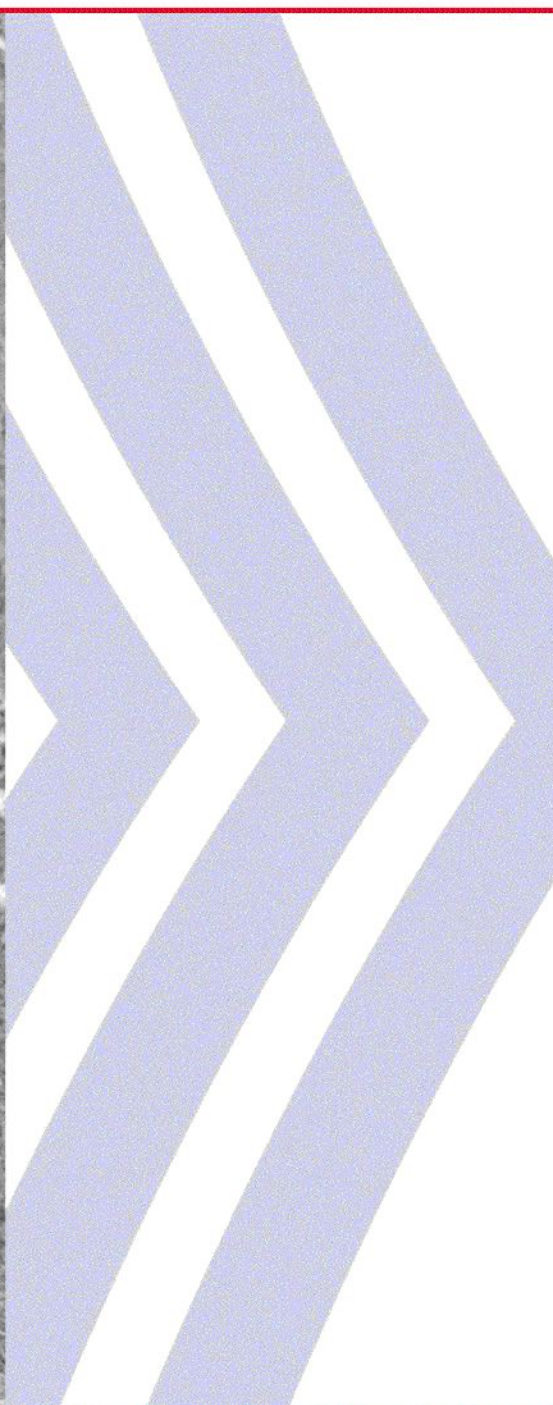
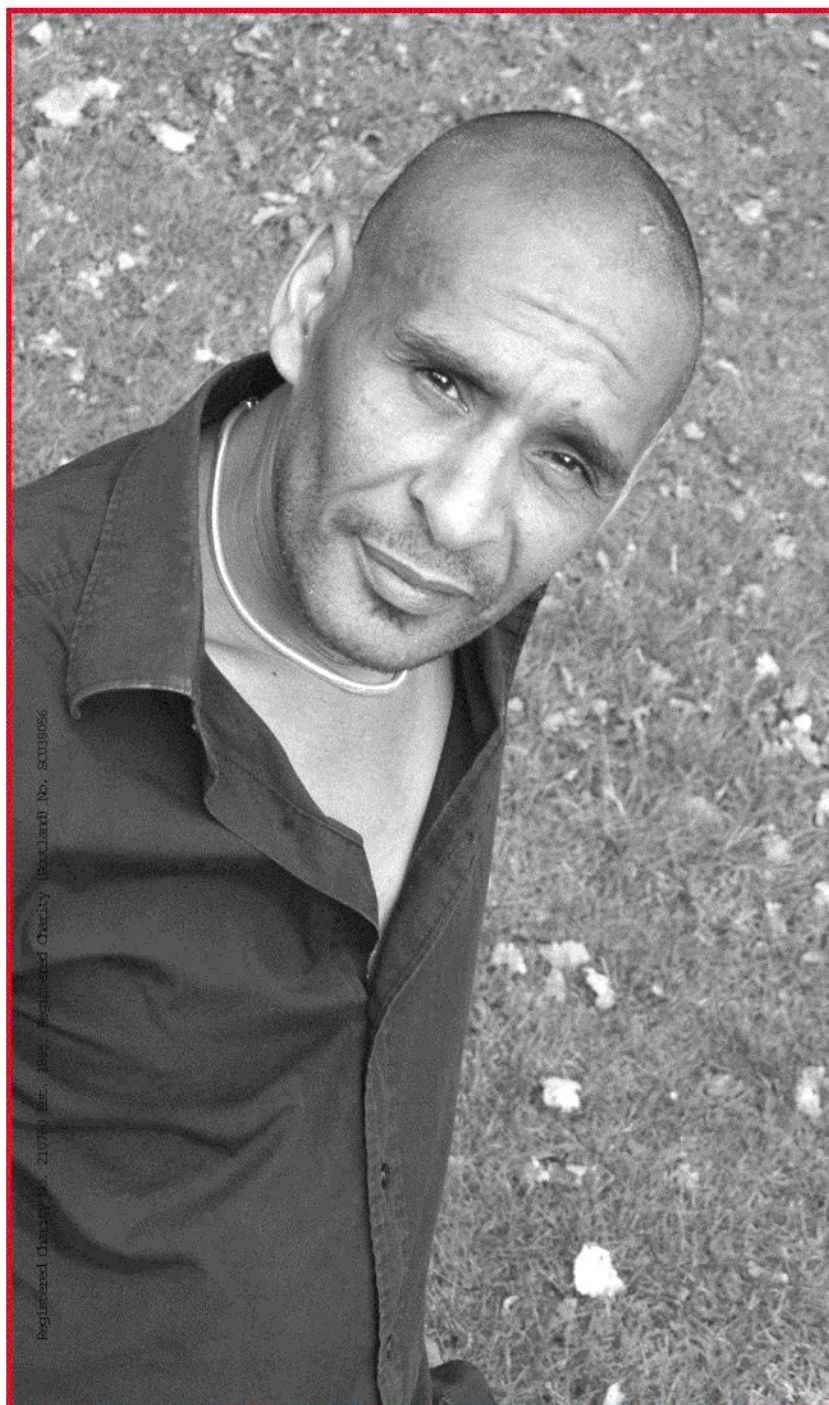
Former semi-professional footballer **Mne Richard 'Dickie' Hollington**, from Petersfield, succumbed at Queen Elizabeth Hospital to wounds suffered in a bomb blast while on patrol near Patrol Base Ezeray eight days earlier.

The 23-year-old passed out of Lymington in September 2008 and joined 40 Cdo three months later, serving with the unit on the Taurus exercises in the Far East.

"He chose to live his days as a lion and to us he was the biggest, if softest, lion in the pride – how proud of him we all are. It was typical of Richard, and a crumb of comfort to us, that even in death he donated his organs to help others in accordance with his wishes," said his family.

Maj Totten added: "With an irrepressible sense of fun and lust for life, Dickie was always at the seat of laughter and his passing has left a tremendous void amongst his companions in Bravo Company."

"He revelled in troop banter and constantly buoyed those around him with his sharp wit and love of friendly debate. Men like Dickie are pure gold in a Patrol Base here in Afghanistan."



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"It's the bad memories that stop you from living properly. When I went to sleep at night it was like I was drowning and it's because of that you are scared to go to bed. If it wasn't for SSAFA I would have ended up on the streets."

More than 25 years after serving in the Falklands War, **Clinton**, 49, is still carrying the mental scars. When SSAFA Forces Help met him he was unable to sleep for the nightmares caused by Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and his debts had spiralled out of control.

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Customs exercise patrolling Royals

SOME Naval Service personnel currently deployed to Afghanistan have been maintaining blogs, available through the Jackspeak section of the RN website (www.royalnavy.mod.uk).

One is 23-year-old Rob Milner, a green beret for four years, serving with 40 Cdo and a member of the Fire Support Group.

Having learned Pashtu before he deployed, Rob also knows something of the local customs, so when he is invited in for a cup of chai at a police checkpoint he can advise colleagues on etiquette.

On occasions, while having chai the policemen offer bread to take back to base, and sometimes even bring out little bowls of meat.

"They also have this goat's milk drink, which has a very peculiar taste and I would rather not drink it, but I would not be so rude as to reject their generous hospitality," said Rob.

"If you're offered something it's part of the culture, part of Pashtunwali, to accept it graciously even if you don't eat/drink it.

"However, when a bowl is passed round you are obliged to take a sip at least and pass it on."

At one police station Royals were invited to dinner, and were sitting on rugs in a large circle with the food in the centre.

"One of the policemen had a big bowl of the cheesy goat's milk," continued Rob.

"He took a big gulp of it before offering it to me. I sipped it and passed it to one of my lads sitting next to me.

"He tried to refuse it but I very quickly explained that he had to take it, and that he would be insulting our hosts if he did not.

"Thankfully he took the bowl and sipped it, desperately trying to hide the grimace on his face as he did so."

Avoiding such cultural faux pas is important, said Rob, as the locals are generally friendly and relaxed.

Such social gatherings also provide Rob with information and gossip about activities in the area.

Rob's contact with the locals is not always so pleasurable – in recent weeks he has acted as interpreter for a ten-year-old boy injured by shrapnel who turned up at the base with his father.

He also helped with an Afghan policeman badly injured by shrapnel when Rob's patrol was caught by a roadside bomb.

Rob kept talking to him in Pashtu, joking at times, in a bid to lower his heart rate.

Back at FOB Jackson he was given first aid and Rob handed over to an interpreter before the injured man was flown to hospital in Camp Bastion "where he received the same treatment as we would have received. He is, after all, part of our team."



D-Day? More like Grou



● Cpl Tony Galacki, with Sharpshooter rifle, and Mne Ross Williamson, with General Purpose Machine Gun, patrolling Sangin on the 66th anniversary of D-Day
Picture: Cpl Barry Lloyd, RLC

JUNE 6 1944 is a date seared into the annals of mankind.

With one massive assault, the Allies dealt the Axis dictatorships a mortal blow and set about ensuring the freedom of Europe and beyond.

Royal Marines were, as usual, within the enemy's sights at the Normandy Landings.

Almost 70 years on and Royal Marines are still in the enemy's sights.

But June 6 2010 is in almost every other aspect unremarkable for the Royals in Helmand province, Afghanistan – it's Groundhog Day.

As in the 1993 film, every day seems eerily similar to the last.

So what might a typical day bring? Take, for example, the green berets of 8 Troop, C Squadron, 40 Commando.

The men of 8 Troop occupy a small patrol base 600 metres south of the heart of Sangin – the hub of 40 Cdo's operations in the region, and once a Taliban stronghold.

June 6 2010 began early with the British working with Afghan security forces to set up a checkpoint in the village next to the patrol base.

Once that was accomplished, a re-supply patrol was sent to the principal base in Sangin, Forward Operating Base (FOB) Jackson, to fetch supplies and water.

While the commandos were out on patrol, their outpost came under attack – a wheelbarrow



● ANP (Afghan National Police) and the ANA (Afghan National Army) visit FOB Jackson

packed with explosives was driven into the patrol base's outer walls.

Meanwhile, the re-supply patrol came under small arms fire from insurgents as they returned to the outlying base.

The returning Royals found the outer wall of the patrol base had been breached, so they worked with Afghan troops to rebuild the defences.

Job finished, there was no time to admire their handiwork – the base came under sustained and accurate enemy fire from the south, so the commandos hit back.

"We received accurate fire and rounds were landing inside the sangars and close to the guys, so we stood the lads to, put them in the sangars and up on the roofs and observed likely firing points," said 40 Cdo's Lt Doug Spencer.

"We spotted two insurgents with weapons that were shooting at the base, so we engaged them in line with our rules of engagement."

It was dusk on June 6 before the skirmishing relented and the commandos had time to reflect on events 66 years before, inspired by the words of a poem written by John Henry Beale, who fought in Normandy with 41 Commando.

"On this day 66 years ago, Royal Marines put the troops ashore, facing unbelievable conditions," said Lt Spencer.

"It's on days like this when you remember that even though conditions here are fairly austere, we're being contacted by insurgents on a daily basis, people before us have had it far harder."

L/Cpl Joe Leborgne added: "The Corps' reputation is built on events since 1664 – that's why we're so proud to be who we are."

"It's important to remember events like D-Day out of respect for the men that have served before and the men that will serve after us."

Of course, not every patrol and activity is met with insurgents' gunfire.

Routine 'ground domination' patrols to provide security for local people are conducted every day in Afghanistan.

The patrols are (hopefully) dull and uneventful, but they are also critical to the overall success of the mission.

A typical patrol might leave FOB Jackson and head to the outskirts of the district centre.

Once there, the Marines might patrol the compounds using the narrow network of alleyways.

They proactively interact and engage with the locals, getting to know them and gaining a better understanding of the area and the needs of the people.

This friendly approach helps to identify any issues that the locals have; issues that ISAF or the stability and reconstruction teams will point out to the District Governor so that they can be resolved.

From here the patrol might move on through the adjacent fields and countryside, heading towards the Southern Checkpoint.

Sgt Sully O'Sullivan, 34, the Troop Sgt who led just such a patrol, said: "Since the harvest has finished, moving through the fields is preferable to moving through



● A member of a Police Mentoring Troop patrol from FOB Jackson, Sangin, with one of the small wind-up powered radios which are being given out to locals as gifts



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● A patrol by PMT (Police Mentoring Troop) from FOB Jackson, Sangin
Pictures: LA(Phot) Si Ethell

Bazaar mix of risk and routine

LT STUART Harrison, who serves in the Royal Navy, has been contemplating life outside the base – his first foray on patrol, and what he found there.

Stuart said waiting to step out for your first patrol in Sangin is like the feeling you get before taking your driving test – a mix of “nervous, anxious excitement combined with the danger of the unknown, and wanting to do your job well.”

“As the Media Officer for the 40 Cdo Group I do not go out on the ground anywhere near as much as the Royal Marines I accompany,” said Stuart.

“I cannot claim to be anywhere near as brave as they are.

“But the lads I do go on patrol with are excellent. They take care of you, protect you and watch your back.”

Stuart said he was surprised how apprehensive he was as he approached the gate on that first patrol – but as soon as he stepped out the tension and apprehension just melted away.

“Everybody says the same thing. I think this is because you are now doing your job,” he said.

“You are alert and ready to respond, but also calm, and able to see what we are really here for. The people.

“That first time, as we patrolled down the road and around the streets to the bazaar I was immediately hit by the sadness of the situation.

“Such a beautiful country – truly, breathtakingly beautiful – reduced to a dilapidated, war-desecrated ruin.

“I was stunned by the number of bullet holes, the piles of rubble and the deserted areas.

“Then you see it. The thriving bazaar.

“We patrolled for about 200 metres down the ‘high street’ and I was astounded by the things you could buy – bikes, fresh vegetables, chickens, packaged foods, drinks, fresh Afghan naan-bread, brightly-coloured fabrics, timber for houses, petrol, and a whole host of metal pots and pans.

“Sometimes, when we are inside the walls of our camp, one forgets that there is a life for the people outside, and that they are doing all the normal things that you and I do when we are back home, including going to the shops.

“Of course we don’t do it under the threat of attack and intimidation, but that just illustrates the resilience of the human spirit, especially in Afghanistan.”

Bandhog Day for 40 Cdo

the high walled areas, where you feel channelled.

“The presence of locals is also a good sign, especially when there are children around; apart from always being pleased to see you it means that the insurgents are less likely to attack.”

The Southern Checkpoint is manned and run by the Afghan National Police, and Royals dropped into the checkpoint for a break and to get a de-brief from police officers on any incidents or problems that occurred that day.

After a 20-minute chat, the patrol moved off in the direction of the Sangin Bazaar, the Royals slowly weaving through the stalls, meeting and engaging with shopkeepers, children and customers alike.

After three hours, having covered more than 3km with no incidents, the men headed back to Jackson to rest before their next patrol.

The interaction with local people also means the Royals can help with ‘hearts and minds’ initiatives, such as an ongoing distribution of radio sets.

40 Cdo enthusiastically took up a request by District Governor Mohammad Sherrif to provide and distribute wind-up or rechargeable radios.

Working with the stabilisation advisor and support team, the commandos have already given out more than 500 radios, with around 1,500 more *en route*.

While still in the early stages, it is hoped that this trial will have a real impact on extending the foundations of good governance and economic development.

Once distribution is complete, the District Governor will be able to communicate directly to the community leaders.

Speaking to local leaders is an effective way of getting messages



● An Osprey lands at FOB Jackson carrying a VIP visitor

cascaded to the people in and around Sangin.

One example of how this communication channel will be used is by allowing the Governor to announce exact legal taxes and who to pay them to – presently, people are being overtaxed because of insurgents posing as officials, causing much grief and acting as a barrier to them overtly supporting the government.



● A Police Mentoring Troop patrol from FOB Jackson stop at an Afghan National Police station at Sangin before they return to base

Trauma and suffering

IAIN Wood, who joined 40 Cdo as their Medical Officer in January 2009, said things had been busy in recent weeks.

The team faced their first MASCAL (mass casualty incident) – a Taliban mortar attack on a civilian compound which left two adults and a four-year-old boy badly injured and three other young children with lesser wounds.

With all Marines having been trained to Team Medic standard, they cared for the less-injured children and assisted in the trauma bay, making themselves incredibly useful.

The three most serious patients were evacuated to Bastion, but one of the adults later died.

Iain said that with the poppy and wheat harvests now brought in, the insurgents were once more picking up their guns, and Afghan policemen and soldiers were

bearing the brunt.

“The stoicism that they face these injuries with is impressive to witness, be it gunshot wounds to limbs, fragmentation wounds to the face and body or, most impressive of all, a bullet to the head with entry and exit wounds three inches apart but no skull penetration at all,” said Iain.

“The police car that this casualty arrived in looked as if it had just driven off the set of a 50’s gangster film – it had bullet holes all down the side and three windows had been shot out.

“The rounds that had injured our patient had passed through the headrest, which had evidently taken sufficient energy out of the round that when it hit his head it glanced around the skull rather than penetrating it.

“In fact, he was in such good condition that he walked by himself to the helicopter.”

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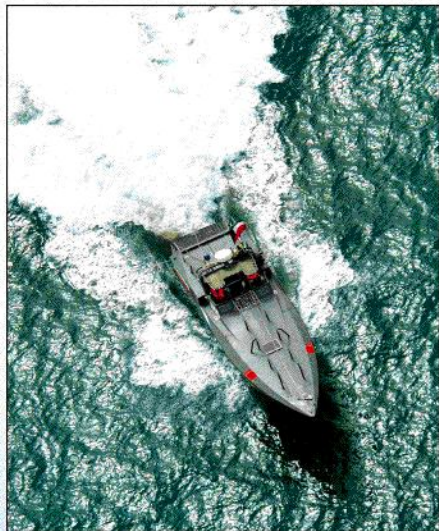
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● The star of the show, HMS St Albans, punches through the northern Gulf and (below) a Kuwaiti fast patrol craft at speed during a search and rescue exercise involving the Gulf state and the Type 23



It Saint half hot, mum...

AS THE Gulf tends to be in summertime.

40-plus degrees Celsius (50-plus on quite a few days).

But does that stop the men and women of HMS St Albans doing their business?

Of course not.

No, the Saint knuckled down to some intensive exercises with her Kuwaiti allies under the glare of the May and June sun.

As befits an alliance, the locals dispatched a welcoming committee for the Portsmouth-based frigate: five Apache gunships (two of which are pictured above).

The Kuwaiti Air Force helicopters are typically found over the desert (indeed it's only Britain which has converted the potent aircraft for use at sea), but their armour-piercing Hellfire missiles could ruin a Type 23's day as much as any tank's...

So the five Apaches proved to be an extremely useful test of St Alban's aerial defence systems.

Other aircraft in Kuwaiti skies were rather less fearsome: Kuwaiti Pumas conducted a series of winchings on to and off the frigate's flight deck.

Meanwhile, St Albans' own air power – Merlin helicopter 'Lola' (no we still don't know the story behind the unusual callsign...) – was scrambled as part of manoeuvres to test the ability of friendly forces to conduct a joint rescue operation.

It was down to the Kuwaiti Coastguard Operations' Centre ashore to choreograph the search and rescue exercise involving maritime and aerial units.

It drew to a close with some combined ship manoeuvring before a Kuwaiti Coastguard vessel berthed alongside the Saint to transfer several personnel.

All this was witnessed by a pair of Kuwaiti naval officers who embarked on the Type 23 to gain an insight into what St Albans – and her sisters who almost constantly deploy to the northern Gulf – bring to maritime operations in this challenging environment.

And lest it be thought that the Kuwaitis had all the 'fun', Saint's Royal Marines boarding team carried out training with their Kuwaiti counterparts in the Kuwaiti Ministry from the Interior.

"Joint operations between friendly nations are essential in building, and enhancing the security and safety at sea for all," said St Albans' CO Cdr Adrian Pierce.

"Over these few days the Royal Navy and the Kuwaiti Forces demonstrated their versatility and proved that they can operate together seamlessly – particularly in vital rescue operations.

"These exercises not only develop and strengthen the skills required for nations to work together, but are also opportunities to further reinforce the strong bond between our two nations."

The exercises bracketed three days in Kuwait's eponymous capital city.

The ship served as a platform for UK industries, in particular those producing equipment suitable for use by Kuwait's coastguard.

Five companies used the 23 as the backdrop to promote their wares which ranged from surveillance radar and electro-optic sensor systems to commercial and military hovercraft, as well as underwater instrumentation.

There was no shortage of senior visitors filing up the St Albans gangway, among them Brig Gen Jassim Mohammed Al Ansari, commander of the Kuwaiti-led coalition task force which upholds the security at sea and oversees safe passage for mariners in the northern Gulf.

The frigate also hosted the British Ambassador to Kuwait, Frank Baker, and the Commodore of Britannia Royal Naval College, Cdr Jake Moores.

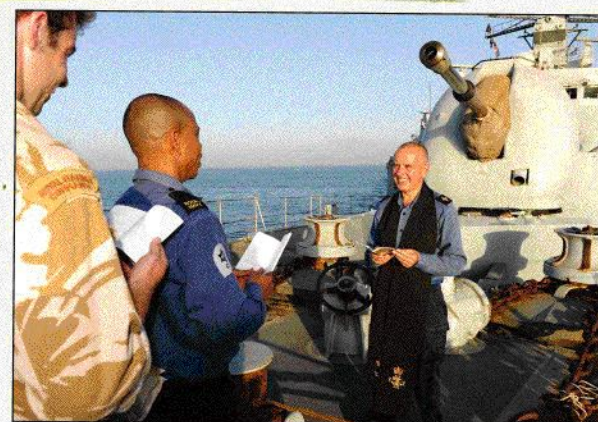
Away from VIPs and top brass, the ship's company challenged local/ex-pat sides to football, rugby and netball matches, there was a spot of golf, some hash running and a football coaching session provided by three of the sailors to local youngsters (see the sports pages for more).

"We can look back at a very busy – but enjoyable – stay. We experienced at first-hand the renowned warm and friendly reception from the people of Kuwait," said Cdr Pierce.

"It was a fantastic opportunity to further UK-Kuwaiti relations, while showing off some of the cutting edge technologies onboard one of the Royal Navy's most modern and capable warships."

The frigate has now resumed more routine duties, namely protecting Iraq's two oil platforms which are the lifeblood of her economy.

The Saint will soon be making for home as her sister HMS Somerset arrives in the region to take over Operation Telic patrols.



● HMS St Albans' 'bish', the Rev Keith Robus, leads a foc's'le service on the frigate in the northern Gulf

Keith Almighty

"THE two Royal Marines checked their magazines, cocked their weapons and flicked on the safety catch as they beckoned me with a nod of the head to follow them. It was a surreal moment as I climbed off the patrol boat into the heavily guarded Iraqi port of Umm Qasr on the Khawr Abd Allah river.

My name is **Keith Robus** and six months ago I was a vicar of a suburban parish in West London.

However after 21 years in parish life, I answered the call by the Almighty to become a chaplain in the Royal Navy. I had been a reservist for three years, but, unbeknown to me at the time, this was just a preliminary for full-time service.

At the beginning of March I left my new home of Portsmouth to join HMS St Albans for their operational deployment in and around the Gulf of Arabia.

A Royal Naval Chaplain is 'a friend and advisor to all'. They carry no rank, and by tradition assume the rate or rank of the person to whom they are talking. They have also been granted the right of confidentiality, as they are outside all reporting structures. This means that sailors are able to confide in their chaplain knowing it will go no further.

The two Royal Marines, 'sea soldiers', were acting as bodyguards for each other and me, as chaplains are forbidden to bear any weapons, as I was brought into the port base to conduct a pastoral visit. It was a moment for reflection, for the only magazine I knew about were parish ones, and the only body armour I had ever worn were football shin pads.

During my stay in Umm Qasr, I was able to lead a church service and celebrate Holy Communion. It was also possible to chat with many of the personnel on the establishment, a coalition of UK, US, UN forces as well as Iraqis.

The ministry at this port base mirrors what happens on a ship. The Chaplain is head of his own department, and has the privilege to join in with the many activities taking place on the vessel to keep it ship shape.

During my time aboard STAL, as her abbreviated name becomes, I have painted some of her outside, greased cables, cooked in the galley, been a casualty in a crash exercise, been winched into Lola, the ship's Merlin helicopter, and swabbed decks, as well as conducting church services.

We are, by our very nature, 'incarnational' chaplains, eating, sleeping, working, exercising and relaxing with the 200 or so sailors within our steel ark.

We count them out for 'the run ashore' and count them back in, playing an active part when pastoral situations arise.

For example, with the majority of the crew aged between 18 and 26, nearly all will have grandparents, and statistically during a deployment sadly some of those grandparents will die.

For the young man or woman it may be their first bereavement and they may not be allowed back for the funeral. HMS St Albans is deployed for over six months and during that length of time, strain may be placed on families and relationships. It is here and in other situations that the listening ear and guidance of the chaplain is of great benefit.

On a happier note, the chaplain is also the 'pint of morale' to be brought out when the routines become just that and the next port visit is weeks away. Many a chaplain has made good use of their privilege at not carrying rank to poke fun at themselves and others – and at times of those in authority but always in a good-natured way.

Were you to ask me, am I enjoying myself and do I find this ministry fulfilling, I would only be able to answer that I think I have the best job in the Royal Navy and that it is a joy and privilege to serve the men and women of HMS St Albans.

Please do pray for us and for all members of Her Majesty's Armed Forces serving in places of danger both at home and overseas."

Small ships, big responsibility

LEADING a flotilla of little ships through hallowed waters, HMS Raider takes part in 70th anniversary commemorations of the Dunkirk evacuation.

Upwards of five dozen little ships made the pilgrimage to the French port, seven decades after their deeds were carved permanently in the annals of British history.

And once again the Royal Navy was on hand to shepherd the craft through challenging seas.

These days the challenge is presented by the sheer volume of traffic (the Strait of Dover is one of the world's most congested narrows) rather than E-boats and the Luftwaffe.

With cadets from HMS Collingwood dispersed around the little ships, the craft formed into two flotillas off Ramsgate, then were guided across the Channel by HM Ships Monmouth and Raider – “It looked like a WW2 convoy – a spectacular sight,” said the latter's CO Lt James Reynolds.

“My executive officer, CPO Nick Dewing, has been in the Navy 24 years. He says it's the most impressive thing he's seen.”

Once off the French coast, Cambridge University boat Raider collected TV presenter and historian Dan Snow and his film crew; they were producing a documentary on the little ships and 70th anniversary events for the BBC.

The filmmakers sailed with the P2000 to Dover... where Prince Michael of Kent – honorary admiral of the Association of Dunkirk Little Ships – was waiting for the vessel. Raider was the prince's ‘steed’ as she made her second crossing of the day to Dunkirk.

And there Raider stayed, joining up once more with the rather larger HMS Monmouth. As commemorations of the sacrifices made over ten days in 1940 reached their climax, the Black Duke fired a 17-gun salute while the ship's Merlin, Blackbird, cast a wreath into the Channel.

Ashore, a platoon from Monmouth marched alongside sailors from other nations during commemorative parades, while the frigate herself

was toured by a good 2,000 Dunkirkers. Sailors from Raider attended church services and dinners, mingling with the dwindling number of veterans of the evacuation; the very youngest of the latter are now in their late 80s.

The weekend was blessed with fine spring weather – rather like 1940 – until it came to the return voyage.

With ceremonies over, the flotilla was due to return in company with HMS Raider on the Monday... but the weather gods weren't being especially kind. Raider had a schedule to keep and so had to depart for Blyth. It fell to the Maritime Volunteer Service to escort the armada of little ships home when it cleared up.

And that posed a little bit of a problem because there were some students from HMS Collingwood who needed to get back to Fareham for courses... so Raider carried out her own ‘Dunkirk evacuation’ offering the cadets a lift home.

“You read about Dunkirk in the history books, and going there is one thing,” said Lt Reynolds. “But to take part in a reenactment with the little ships around us, to have the honour of leading them across the Channel, to be at the head of that flotilla, that really is quite something.”

“Meeting the veterans was an extremely humbling experience – and quite inspiring. Even seeing the beaches today – they are vast – and knowing how shallow the water is, you understand how difficult it was in 1940. It really was an immense effort.”

From Dunkirk, HMS Monmouth made for Belfast and the city's maritime festival (see page 6), while HMS Raider has begun her summer deployment in company with the other varsity boat, HMS Tracker.

The duo are heading for Gibraltar with students from Oxford and Cambridge Universities on board and should be in La Coruña right about now.

Picture: LA(Phot) Dean Nixon, FRPU East



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SHIPS OF THE ROYAL NAVY No.649

THERE was a time – not too long ago – in the pages of *Navy News* when sailors lamented that there were few ships in the modern fleet with 'hard' names.

Well, they don't come any 'harder' than this one HMS *Vengeance*: inflicting punishment or exacting retribution for being wronged.

In *Vengeance's* case, the 'hard' name is reinforced by a hard 'bite': up to 16 Trident nuclear missiles, the ultimate weapons in Britain's arsenal.

The submarine is the youngest of four Vanguard-class boats based in Faslane which uphold the nation's nuclear deterrent.

To maintain a constant presence – there is always one ballistic missile submarine on patrol – *Vengeance* has two crews: port (Cdr Andrew Bower) and starboard (Cdr Richard Small). While one crew is on deterrent patrol, the other is either training or on leave.

Vengeance was launched in September 1998, commissioned the following year and conducted her maiden patrol in early 2001. She has fired her main armament once – a test launch of a Trident (minus warhead, of course) in the autumn of 2000, as all V-boats must do at least once per commission.

To her fell the honour of conducting the 300th patrol by the deterrent fleet, begun all the way back in June 1968 by HMS *Resolution* and her *Polaris* missiles.

For the duration of a patrol, the men of *Vengeance* work six hours on, six hours off (1pm-7pm, 7pm-1am, 1am-7am and 7am-1pm so that everyone catches breakfast, lunch and dinner while off duty).

Their sole link with the outside world is a daily print-out of world news and sporting results, plus 60 words sent twice a week by loved ones.

The sacrifices the crew make will be honoured later this year with the first issuing of the RN Deterrent Patrol Pin for any man who completes one or more patrol of 30 days' duration (they last rather longer than that normally...).

As the youngest of the quartet, *Vengeance* has yet to receive her three-year mid-life refit (*Vanguard* and *Victorious* have already undergone the overhaul in Devonport; *Vigilant* is about half-way through the process now).

Despite their boat's 'hard' name, the ship's company are big softies really. They maintain close links with Bury St Edmunds (the starboard crew were the last to visit towards the end of 2009), and the town's Sea Cadets.

The latter are fairly regularly beneficiaries of fundraising by the bomber crew, as is Riverwalk School, which caters for children with special needs.

The *Vengeance* name begins in 1758 with a 28-gun frigate captured from the French.

Her successor, a 74-gun frigate, fought with distinction in the West Indies and latterly housed French prisoners of war...

... as did another *Vengeance* in service at the same

time. This fourth-rate was captured from the French but after being stranded spent the rest of her career as a prison hulk.

There was one more *Vengeance* in the age of sail: this 84-gun second-rate served from 1824 until the end of the century, earning a battle honour for the Crimea.

By the time she was broken up, plans were in hand for the first powered *Vengeance*, a Canopus-class pre-dreadnought.

She joined the Fleet in 1902 and served in the Far East and home waters, before helping to escort British troops to the Continent in 1914.

Vengeance was dispatched to the Mediterranean for the opening stages of the Dardanelles, earning the ship's final battle honours.

The most recent *Vengeance*, a Colossus-class carrier, arrived in the Far East just too late to take part in WW2. She was loaned to the Royal Australian Navy in the mid-50s, before being sold to Brazil.

As the *Minas Gerais*, the carrier was in service until the 21st Century, when she was finally paid off. Despite a vociferous campaign to save her for use as a museum ship in the UK, she was broken up in India.

Picture: LA(Phot) Stu Hill, FRPU North



Quiberon Bay.....1759
Martinique.....1794
St Lucia.....1796
Crimea.....1854
Dardanelles.....1915

Class: Vanguard-class SSBN
ballistic missile submarine
Pennant Number: S31
Builder: Vickers Shipbuilding,
Barrow-in-Furness
Laid down: February 1 1993
Launched: September 19 1998
Commissioned: November 27
1999
Displacement: 15,680 tons
(dived)
Length: 149.9m (491ft)
Beam: 12.8m (42ft)
Draught: 12m (39ft)
Complement: 14 officers; 121
ratings
Propulsion: Rolls Royce PWR2
(Pressurised Water Reactor)
nuclear reactor; two GEC
turbines; two auxiliary retractable
propulsion motors; two WH Allen
turbo generators; two Paxman
diesel alternators
Sensors: BAE Systems SCMS;
Thales Underwater Systems
Type 2054 composite sonar
suite comprising: towed array
sonar, hull-mounted active and
passive search sonar, passive
intercept and ranging sonar;
Kelvin Hughes Type 1007 I band
navigation radar
Armament: 16 ballistic missile
tubes capable of firing Trident
D5 SLBM missiles carrying
up to 192 warheads, four 21in
(533mm) torpedo tubes capable
of firing Spearfish torpedoes

Battle honours

Ultimate Vengeance

HEROES OF THE ROYAL NAVY No.75 – S/Lt Arthur Giles Blake



WHILE the RAF basks in the reflected glory of its deeds 70 years ago this summer, here's a timely reminder from the photographic archives of the Imperial War Museum that victory in 1940 was a triumph of the free world.

Relaxing between sorties outside their crew room at RAF Fowlmere at Manor Farm in Cambridgeshire are (left to right), Plt Off Wallace 'Jock' Cunningham, S/Lt Arthur Giles Blake and New Zealander Fg Off Frank Brinsden (holding Rangy the spaniel).

Blake – known by comrades in 19 Squadron as 'Admiral' – was one of 23 naval aviators seconded to the RAF during the dark days of 1940.

In 1940, the 23-year-old had been serving at HMS *Daedalus* when he was drafted to 19 Squadron, first at RAF Duxford, then to Duxford's satellite airfield at Fowlmere.

Blake proved to be a wise choice; he's one of only around half a dozen credited naval 'aces' during WW2 – status granted to pilots who downed five or more enemy aircraft.

Six and a half Luftwaffe aircraft were shot down by Blake's guns in September and October 1940. Five of those were Messerschmitt Bf109s – proof that the young naval aviator was a highly-adept flier.

Indeed two of the premier German fighters of the day were downed in a single sortie on September 17 1940 – subsequently commemorated as Battle of Britain Day. Two more were shot down on September 27.

Arthur Blake also downed a Heinkel 111 medium bomber, shared the destruction of another (hence the 'half kill') and possibly despatched a twin-engined Bf110 Zerstörer heavy fighter.

His luck ran out in the fading light of October 29 1940 over Chelmsford, Essex. He was shot down and killed in his Spitfire Mk IIa P7423 QV-Y.

Arthur Blake was 19 Sqn's last casualty of the Battle of Britain (the official end date is October 31). He joined ten other Fleet Air Arm pilots on 'eternal patrol'.

As for the Admiral's comrades, Wallace Cunningham and Frank Brinsden survived the battle. The former was shot down in the summer of 1941 and ended up in Stalag Luft III of 'Great Escape' fame. Brinsden served throughout the war and into peacetime, rising to the rank of wing commander.

The two dozen naval fliers attached to the RAF that summer and autumn were not the sole Royal Navy participants in Britain's finest hour.

Two Fleet Air Arm squadron came under Air Force control during the battle: 804 and 808 NAS.

The Gladiators of 804 at Hatston on Orkney and 808's Fairey Fulmars based on the Scottish mainland at Wick were charged with defending the Fleet at Scapa Flow.

■ THIS image (CH1459) – and 9,999,999 others from a century of war and peace – can be viewed or purchased at www.iwmcollections.org.uk, by emailing photos@iwm.org.uk, or by phoning 0207 416 5333.

This photograph can also be seen until the end of the year at an exhibition at the IWM's Duxford museum charting the air station's role in the Battle of Britain.

Internet users can follow daily life for pilots and ground crew at Duxford during the summer of 1940 via a special Twitter page, twitter.com/RAFDuxford1940

With thanks to Ian Proctor



● The ship's company of HMS Ocean line up in Procedure Alpha as the carrier prepares to cross the Atlantic on Exercise Auriga 2010 off the eastern seaboard of the United States

An Ocean of experiences

SLEDGEHAMMER and nut spring to mind.

The sledgehammer? HMS Ocean, at 20,700 tonnes the largest warship in the Royal Navy. And the nut? That'll be Dean Smith's jet ski, weighing in at under 0.3 tonnes.

The Navy's helicopter carrier was busy exercising off the coast of Cornwall when they were alerted to a jet skier in trouble.

Dean Smith had set off from Fowey that morning and was touring the coast when his high-powered machine started taking on water.

Mr Smith sent a distress call, which was picked up by Brixham Coastguard, and Ocean, carrying out amphibious training at nearby Pentewan Beach, was alerted.

It doesn't matter how big or small you are, if a fellow mariner is in trouble, you lend a hand.

In this instance the command team did not have to hoick the mighty assault ship out of her training programme – they were able to send a sea boat away (which was still a good deal bigger than the jet ski...)

Lt Cdr David Pickles, Ocean's Senior Air Traffic Controller, said: "We immediately launched our sea boat to provide assistance."

"With AB Cora Wilkinson at the helm, assisted by AB Frazer MacLennan, the sea boat arrived at the scene within ten minutes and the crew pulled a relieved Mr Smith from the water – a little cold, but otherwise uninjured."

"He was taken to nearby Mevagissey, with his half-submerged jet ski in tow, where the rescue team were greeted by a large crowd of well-wishers."

"As professional sailors we are well trained in responding to such incidents, and are pleased that we were in a position to be able to assist Mr Smith so quickly."

The rescue came while the carrier was in the thick of an intensive five-week Operational Sea Training package designed



● Second Sea Lord Vice Admiral Sir Alan Massey talks to sailors at action stations in Ocean's ops room

to test her amphibious capability before she sailed to join the Auriga 2010 deployment to the United States.

Ocean had sailed from Plymouth on April 19 at the start of the Flag Officer Sea Training (FOST) programme.

She started with a two-week work-up to bring everyone to a state of readiness, followed by the main three-week phase which started with a formal safety inspection and assessment of the

ship's material state.

Once again the forces of Brownia and Ginger were at loggerheads, and Ocean formed part of a UN task force enforcing an exclusion zone off Brownia, also known as the West Country.

Thursday Wars tested the ship and her sailors with bomb and missile attacks, while there was also a ship protection exercise, guarding against hostile armed protesters while in Freeport,



which looked remarkably like Plymouth.

With the political situation deteriorating, an amphibious landing was required during the second week, and the final week saw Royal Marines of 42 Cdo attack terrorist bases ashore while the ship set up a receiving centre in Freeport to coordinate the evacuation of British nationals.

The final inspection, conducted during Thursday Wars, allowed Second Sea Lord Vice Admiral Sir Alan Massey the chance to see Ocean's progress for himself.

A tired ship's company was given the good news that Ocean had passed her ordeal, and they could prepare for their transatlantic deployment.

But before she left there was another high-profile visit, this time by the Queen and Duke of Edinburgh.

Ocean's Commanding Officer, Capt Keith Blount, said: "It is a very special day because we like to think Her Majesty has special affection for HMS Ocean, and this is less a ceremonial event and more of a personal visit for her, to meet the families and friends linked to HMS Ocean and her ship's company."

The Queen met some of the 450 family and friends of those serving on board, who lined the jetty to see her.

The VIP visitors met members of the ship's company and air group before attending a lunch reception in the ward room.

Before leaving, the Queen was presented with a bouquet by 11-year-old Hannah Mahony and eight-year-old Joshua Monks.

The following day, the families were invited back for an opportunity to experience life on board the warship.



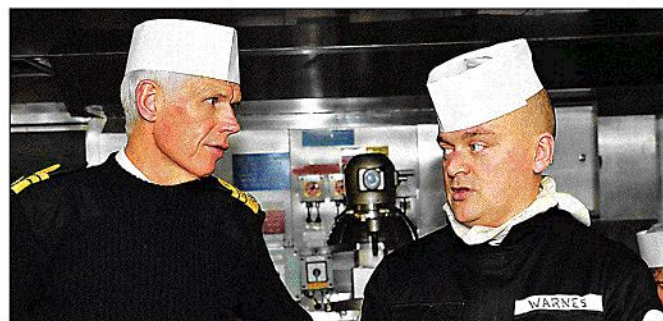
● A sea boat from HMS Ocean, manned by AB Cora Wilkinson (helm) and AB Frazer MacLennan, dashes to the rescue of a jet skier



● The Queen meets Fleet Air Arm personnel on board Ocean



● The Duke of Edinburgh with Ocean's Commander, Cdr Mark Taylor



● Second Sea Lord Vice Admiral Sir Alan Massey chats with PO Caterer Warnes



● Troops from HMS Ocean go ashore in the West Country



● Firefighting training on board HMS Ocean

Pictures: LA (Phot) Guy Pool

Show line-ups confirmed

THE line-up for the RN's premier public event of the year – Portsmouth Navy Days – is now pretty much confirmed with less than a month to go.

Britain's two newest warships HMS Daring and Dauntless (£1bn apiece...) are likely to be the biggest draws...

... but the Type 45 destroyers aren't the largest vessel at the Friday July 30-Sunday August 1 event: RFA Argus, the aviation training and casualty receiving ship is the most imposing attendee.

Also on display are frigates Richmond and Westminster, mine hunter HMS Cattistock, fishery protection ship HMS Tyne, and the smallest vessel in the RN inventory, survey launch Gleaner.

The French are sending their fishery ship/patrol vessel FS Cormoran.

Attractions in the sky include the RN Historic Flight, the Lynx display team the Black Cats from RNAS Yeovilton, the Royal Artillery's parachute display team the Black Knights, while a coastguard helicopter and a lifeboat will stage a rescue demonstration.

Tickets are priced £17.50/£14.50 per day for adults/concessions in advance (£19.50/£16 on the gate), or £50 for a family ticket (£55 on the gate). They're available from www.navydaysuk.co.uk or 023 9283 9766.

■ If you don't catch the Black Cats over Portsmouth Harbour, you can see them at Cudrose Air Day on Wednesday July 28.

They'll be joined in Cornish skies by a SAR and 'Bagger' Sea Kings from Cudrose, the RN Historic Flight, a Dutch F16, the Royal Jordanian Falcons display team, nine replica aircraft from the Great War Display Team, plus vintage Spitfires, Seafires, and Skyriders and Wasps.

Gates open at 9am, flying begins at 1.30pm and the day ends at 6pm.

Tickets are £10/£5 for adults/children in advance (£15/£5 on the gate) from ticketzone.co.uk or 08444 99 99 55.

Strike up the bands

THERE'S a day of top quality military music in Portsmouth this month – and it's all free.

Nine Royal Navy Volunteer Bands will compete at their annual festival on Saturday July 3.

Bandsmen and women – all connected with the RN but not full-time professional musicians – from nine establishments will perform indoors and outdoors from 8.40am.

The festival begins in Guildhall Square where the nine bands – representing Portsmouth, Heron, Neptune, Seahawk, Sultan, Collingwood, Devonport, Northwood and BRNC – will be judged on their marching displays.

In the afternoon, performances shift inside the Guildhall where each band will stage a 15-minute concert programme.

In between the bands' performances, the RN Pipers' Society will be providing the entertainment.

The festival ends a little after 5pm with prizegiving.

Although the event is free, tickets are required to watch the afternoon session; they are available now from the Guildhall box office.

Crash test dummy run at Sultan

WHAT do you do with an unwanted Sea King?

Well the team at HMS Sultan have the answer: you use it as the backdrop for a casualty exercise.

With a helicopter turned over on its side, emergency parties at the Gosport establishment were expected to deal with the ensuing fire, extricate casualties and provide on-the-spot medical aid.

The exercise was aimed at preparing medical staff currently serving at Sultan prepare for an impending tour of duty in Helmand on Operation Herrick 14.

The medics were tested dealing with burns victims, breaks and fractures and one flier with severe chest wounds (although all made miraculous recoveries once the exercise was done and the fake blood was washed off).

"The exercise gave me the opportunity to put my skills to the test," said MA O'Grady.

"It was a good start to preparations for my forthcoming Afghanistan deployment."

Also involved was a class of trainee air engineering officers, giving them an insight into something they'll probably face at least once during their careers with the Fleet Air Arm.

Picture: LA(Phot) Darby Allen, HMS Sultan



Viking warriors honoured



ROYAL Marines inspect a new memorial to their comrades killed in action in Vikings in Afghanistan.

The monument – a Platt Mount from a Viking armoured vehicle – used to be found at the Viking vehicle park on the edge of Camp Bastion, and was passed daily as the Royals headed out on patrol.

Four members of the Armoured Support Group RM – Mnes Dale Gostick and Jason Mackie, Cpl Rob Deering, L/Cpl Rob Richards – and one member of Armoured Support Company (Army), Tpr Robert Pearson were killed on operations in Afghanistan during 2008 and 2009.

Group Sergeant Major – now WO1 Matthew Tomlinson MC – had the idea of bringing the memorial back to the UK.

Here it was refurbished and mounted on rocks, also from Bastion, and dedicated at the ASG's base of RNAS Yeovilton with air station commander Brig Mark Noble and 3 Commando Brigade CO Brig Ed Davis in attendance, plus friends and family of the men honoured.

"Memorials matter, they are a link to the past to recognise the selfless bravery and dedication of our servicemen and women, they have relevance here and now as we come to terms with who we have lost and provide a beacon of hope and aspiration for the future," said Brig Davis.

Picture: LA(Phot) Abbie Gadd, RNAS Yeovilton

Children learn about Royal Oak tragedy

A NEW generation of youngsters will learn of the sacrifices their forebears made as one of the worst disasters in Royal Navy history becomes part of the school curriculum.

In 1939 the sinking of the battleship HMS Royal Oak in the supposedly safe haven of Scapa Flow shocked the Senior Service – and nation – to the core and brought the First Lord of the Admiralty, Winston Churchill, to tears.

Of the 833 men lost when the battleship sank, 120 of them were aged under 18. In the wake of the tragedy, the rules were changed; no boy would serve on the front line without his parents' approval or special permission.

It is the fate of those 120 boys, and the persistent efforts of a relative of one of the Royal Oak's victims, which has prompted the tragedy's inclusion in the Scottish schools' curriculum.

An information pack has been produced for teachers, including an 11-minute video, by Learning and Teaching Scotland, the educational arm of the Scottish Government.

"The Royal Oak is not only a tragedy, but it's of huge personal interest," said David Turner, who has talked extensively about the Royal Oak tragedy and been involved with two documentaries.

The tragedy also prompted him to write a book, *Last Dawn*, which has become a bestseller, and is being translated into Gaelic, Welsh and German.

Mr Turner has lived in the shadow of the battleship's loss since he was nine; his uncle Cdr Ralph Lennox Woodrow-Clark, a high-flyer tipped for the highest echelons of the Senior Service, was among the victims.

Aside from that personal connection, it's the fate of the battleship's boy sailors

which has always shocked the author.

"Wherever I've talked about the Royal Oak, I've been approached by children or students," Mr Turner said. "They asked: why don't we learn about this in our schools?"

"It's the horrendous loss of life of boy sailors which schools can relate to."

"It is important that we never forget the sacrifices made by that generation. Children also need to know what happened to people of their age."

And now they will, thanks to the learning pack. "It's taken a lot of hard work and letters to education chiefs, but it's been my burning ambition to get it into the curriculum," said Mr Turner.

You can view the teaching resources used by schools in Scotland at www.ltsotland.org.uk/scotlandsculture/royaloaksinking/index.asp and also download an 11-minute documentary.

EXPLOSION MUSEUM OF NAVAL FIREPOWER

Waterbus to help museum

A WATERBUS service has been introduced to Portsmouth Harbour to link naval attractions on both sides of the water.

Running throughout the summer, the new link coincides with the revamp and relaunch of the naval firepower museum Explosion at Priddy's Hard in Gosport.

The museum charts not just the weaponry which helped the RN become the pre-eminent naval force between the 18th and 20th Centuries, but also the people who toiled to produce those weapons. At the peak of production during WW2, some 2,500 women worked at Priddy's Hard.

Since opening nine years ago, Explosion has been dogged by financial problems and has struggled to attract visitors.

The museum was intended to be the centrepiece of a development which would see shops, bars and restaurants, plus homes built around the historic site.

Key to its success would be good links with other harbour attractions, chiefly by waterbus.

Houses were built at Priddy's Hard, but not the amenities and the long-mooted waterbus service was never introduced.

Under the threat of closure, the site was taken over by the Portsmouth Historic Dockyard last autumn with the promise of revamping Explosion – and hopefully reversing its fortunes.

Displays in some of Explosion's dozen or so galleries have been overhauled and updated over the winter, the museum logo (above) has changed, and the website (www.explosion.org.uk) has been completely redesigned.

The last act of the refurbishment was to dredge a channel at Priddy's Hard and install a pontoon for the waterbus; it links Explosion with the RN Submarine Museum in Gosport, the historic dockyard and the Gunwharf Quays shopping/leisure complex.

Full details on times and prices at www.portsmouth-boat-trips.co.uk

■ Visitors to the Royal Navy Submarine Museum can see the world's first submersible – and we're not talking Holland I.

The 'Drebbel' is a working scale replica of a 17th Century 'submarine' built by Dutch inventor Cornelius van Drebbel (he also invented the chimney, the microscope, a thermostat for an oven and a scarlet dye).

Built in the 1620s, the original was tested extensively in the Thames.

It was powered by 12 rowers whose oars stuck out through flexible leather seals. They breathed through snorkel tubes at depths down to about 15ft and could remain submerged for several hours.

The replica was built for a BBC documentary *Building the Impossible* back in 2002 using the tools of the day.

It was successfully tested on a lake at Eton Dorney near Windsor and rowed underwater for ten minutes.



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Arches... and Archer

WE'VE lost count of how many arches there are in this wonderful shot of the Tyne.

But there's only one Archer (she's the bit of battleship grey with green foc's'le in the foreground).

Gateshead's Millennium Bridge was tilted to allow the P2000 patrol boat to pass and begin her summer deployment.

(For the completist the other bridges in the image are – foreground to background – the Tyne Bridge, the swing bridge, the High Level road and rail bridge, the Metro bridge and finally the King Edward VII bridge.)

Newcastle is 'second home' to Archer, based in Aberdeen where she serves the city's university. Maintenance on the P2000 is carried out on the Tyne.

And it's to the Tyne that the vessel came for her operational sea training with Newcastle native HMS Example and HMS Explorer from Hull.

OST for these small craft is a 2½-day affair (there's no Thursday War...) with the exacting people from FOST testing the crew's navigation and seamanship skills, maintenance, fire and flood – basically a safety check to decide

whether the boats can take students to sea.

And they can, receiving a 'very satisfactory' from the FOST staff for their efforts.

With that tick in the box, Archer headed off on her summer deployment with 11 students and six young officers on board.

First stop was London and 70th

anniversary commemorations of General de Gaulle's appeal to Frenchmen to continue the struggle against the Nazis; Archer carried First Sea Lord Admiral Sir Mark Stanhope and France's Ambassador to the UK, Maurice Gourdaud-Montagne, under Tower Bridge (which also had to be raised) to a reception in the Pool of London.



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Nelson victorious but Ambush is a surprise

Cardiff is not the final word

CARDIFF was leading the way on Armed Forces Day as *Navy News* went to press.

With Royal support, plus plenty of other famous names playing a part, the day promised to build on the foundations laid at Chatham in last year's inaugural national event.

Among those nailing their colours to the Cardiff mast were David Williams, Matt Lucas, Katherine Jenkins, Ruth Jones, Graham Norton, Jimmy Carr and Ray Winston, who have all recorded messages of support for a film to be played on big screens in the Welsh capital.

The main parade through the city was due to be led by the Prince of Wales and Duchess of Cornwall.

In Cardiff Bay a drumhead service, fly-past by the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight and Red Arrows, military displays, a dynamic air display and an evening concert featuring the Soldiers and Only Men Aloud will take place.

And one of the Royal Navy's major contributions will be Type 23 frigate HMS Kent, which will be open to visitors – more on the big day in next month's paper.

But the national show of support for the UK's Armed Forces, veterans and cadets does not end in Cardiff.

Right through this month further events are being staged around the country, from Penzance (July 3-5) to Perth (July 2), from Bicester (July 11) to Beverley (July 4).

Further details of dates and locations are available from the dedicated Armed Forces Day website www.armedforcesday.org.uk

40 years since Black Tot Day

THIS month sees the 40th anniversary of Black Tot Day – at just before midday on July 31 1970 the last official issue of rum to sailors was made.

The event was marked at home and abroad with due ceremony, with mock funerals and black arm bands prevalent, though it was generally acknowledged that 95.5 degrees proof rum, whether watered down or mixed with lime juice and sugar or not, did not sit comfortably with modern hi-tech machinery and weaponry.

PORTSMOUTH may have taken the main prize at the Navy's Field Gun competition, but another unit celebrated an unexpected triple success.

The annual festival of brain, brawn and bravery which forms the highlight of HMS Collingwood's annual Open Day attracted 23 teams from far and wide, including Gibraltar and Naples.

Sponsored by VT Flagship, the Brickwoods competition was the culmination of seven weeks of intense training for the 18-man crews, but it was seconds that counted in the end as Nelson stormed in with a time of 1m 19.72s against the Army's REME (1m 20.93s) with MOD Abbey Wood third.

But it wasn't just the big boys who were winning the praise of First Sea Lord Admiral Sir Mark Stanhope, who praised the competitors for their "teamwork, camaraderie, grit and comradeship."

Down the order, in the Plate 2 competition (deciding places between 13 and 18) was a team who had overcome the odds just to be there.

The Mighty Bush represented submarine HMS Ambush, still in build in Barrow and a unit which would normally struggle to field a five-a-side team.

The Field Gun crew of 18 represented almost a quarter of Ambush's ship's company, and when No 1 Trainer Cox'n Steve Thorpe, No 2 Trainer and judge



● Portsmouth Naval Base during one of their prize-winning runs at HMS Collingwood

Lt Cdr Ian MacIntyre, POPTI Stu Conder and other support staff are included, almost half the boat's crew were involved in the first entry by a submarine.

And they got their reward.

They took the Plate 2 final by edging out HMS Collingwood B, then were amazed to find they had also won the Fleet Trophy, beating HMS Campbelltown.

And the icing on the cake came with the presentation of a third piece of silverware – the Endeavour Trophy for the No 1 Trainer and crew who had overcome most challenges en route to Collingwood.

The Fareham establishment saw 7,000 people enter the gates to enjoy the day, which included live music, a funfair and displays.

Anniversary impetus for mines memorial

AN appeal to commemorate the bravery of Navy mine clearance and diving personnel has been given further impetus by a special anniversary.

On June 14 1940, 70 years ago, came the first incident in which a submerged mine was made safe by a diver from the old HMS Vernon.

The German parachute mine had been seen falling into the approaches to Poole Harbour in Dorset, and its exact location was found by a diver after initial detection work by the Vernon-based echo-sounding yachts Esmeralda and Sir Sydney.

The diving party was made up of a mobile diving unit from Portsmouth, backed up by divers from HMS Vernon who had been trained in Rendering Mines Safe – then a new and hazardous specialisation.

AB Robert George Tawn was sent down and, in the gloomy water, he found the cylindrical mine lying flat on the sea bed.

He made it safe for lifting, but as it was being towed to shore it suddenly exploded for no apparent reason.

AB Tawn was awarded the DSM for his bravery, and later won the BEM, but he was killed at Falmouth working on another mine.

Project Vernon is the campaign to raise funds for a monument to mine clearance and naval diving personnel, to be located at the Gunwharf Quays shopping and entertainment complex in Portsmouth on the site of the former HMS Vernon.

For more information on the campaign see www.Vernon-Monument.org

Top dog at BRNC selected

THOSE young pups at Dartmouth will soon get the chance to show their worth.

No, not the officer cadets – the young hounds from the Britannia Beagle pack, which will be showing their paces on July 10 when the Champion Puppy will be selected at the Centenary Puppy Show at Britannia Royal Naval College.

The Britannia Beagle pack is one of the oldest in the country, having been formed in 1878 by Lt Guy Mainwaring, who was serving in the Cadet Training Ship HMS Britannia.

The puppy show is only now celebrating its centenary, as it was not held in the pack's first years, or during the two world wars.

The hounds are named after warships where possible, and recent additions to the pack include the puppies Albion, Artful and Ambush.

This year a strong contender to be Champion Puppy is Richmond.

The centenary will be celebrated with a traditional breakfast in the Gunroom followed by the judging of the puppies.

Town tribute

A MUSICAL tribute has been paid to the inhabitants of Wootton Bassett by the Royal Marines Band Service.

A new concert march named after the Wiltshire town has been composed by Maj Pete Curtis, which includes a representation of a C-17 Globemaster aircraft flying into RAF Lyneham and the sound of the town's church bells.

The people of the Wiltshire town pay special respects to every British Serviceman or woman whose body is flown to Lyneham and then passes through Wootton Bassett to the John Radcliffe Hospital in Oxford.

A service has been held at the Armed Forces Memorial at the National Arboretum to mark the addition of 119 new names to the walls – 2009 saw the largest number of UK Armed Forces deaths in the past 20 years.

Code call

BLETCHLEY Park, home of the National Codes Centre, will host an Armed Forces weekend early this month to celebrate both the Services and the cadet forces.

For more details on the weekend, on July 3 and 4, see www.bletchleypark.org.uk



● The Mighty Bush – HMS Ambush – make their mark

Museum all set to open

A NEW museum at Chatham has taken a number of special deliveries as it prepares for its official opening later this month.

Several superb models from partners the National Maritime Museum and the Imperial War Museum arrived at No 1 Smithery, a £13m new museum experience and cultural venue at the Historic Dockyard.

Opening to the public on July 24, No 1 Smithery: National Treasures Inspiring Culture reveals, for the first time under one roof, a collection of the UK's world-class maritime treasures, art

and objects, combining museum galleries with visual art and family-friendly and educational activities.

No.1 Smithery has five main areas within it (National Museums – Maritime Treasures; the Gallery; the Courtyard (a large area for family activities); the Pipebending Floor and National Museums – Collections and Research) and is included in the normal admission price to the Historic Dockyard.

For more details about No 1 Smithery and other attractions see the dockyard website at www.chdt.org.uk



● French Navy sail training ships Étoile and Mutin at HMS President in London

Picture: PO(Phot) Amanda Reynolds

French ships honoured

TWO French ships which played a major role in special operations in World War 2 were honoured in a ceremony in London.

As French president Nicolas Sarkozy attended ceremonies marking the 70th anniversary of Gen de Gaulle's defiant wartime broadcast from the BBC, Naval VIPs gathered at HMS President to unveil plaques aboard schooners Étoile and Mutin, the latter which served from the Channel to the Adriatic.

First Sea Lord Admiral Sir Mark Stanhope and Chef d'État-Major de la Marine Nationale Amiral

Pierre Forissier toured the ships with veterans of the Special Operations Executive (SOE), the wartime espionage and sabotage specialists who fought Axis powers by "indirect" methods.

Among those invited were relatives of prominent SOE operatives, including Sir Francis Richards, whose late father was the captain of the Mutin and a member of the SOE, and his uncle R O Richards, who served in the same unit.

The Executive Officer's daughter Lady Victoria Getty was also on the guest list.

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'chuting stars over Sultan

NOW here's a sight to warm the cockles of any Briton's heart.

Yup, a cloudless summer's day – not too many of those.

The sight of the parachutist from the RN Raiders display team isn't bad either.

The Raiders dropped in (*groan* – Ed) on HMS Sultan Summer Show – a two-day extravaganza of things nautical... and not so nautical... at the home of RN engineering.

Around 21,000 people passed through the gates of the Gosport establishment during the show.

A further 900 local disabled and disadvantaged children and their families were treated to a party on the day before the event.

The children enjoyed all the fun of Peter

Burnett's funfair as well as a village fête: an area created and run by Sultan staff – Service and civilian personnel – who were dressed as pirates and ran stalls including 'Soak a Sailor', 'Splat a Rat' and the obligatory coconut shy.

The following day the main arena served as the landing site for the Raiders, as well as the venue for the Imps motorcycle display team (*pictured below*), the Tricky Tykes terrier racing team, the Band of Her Majesty's Royal Marines Collingwood and a steam rally with a marching display... not all at the same time.

The annual Volunteer Cadet Corps Field Gun Competition was also staged.

Hotly-contested as ever, it was eventually won by a home-grown crew from Sultan.

Picture: LA(Phot) Darby Allen, HMS Sultan



● The Fighting G executes a tight turn as she tries to evade a low-flying Hawk jet during a Thursday War at OST

Bloody – and bloody good

LEST it be thought we're only interested in shiny new Type 45s at OST (*see the centre pages*), well here's a stirring tale from a venerable 42.

And while next-generation destroyer HMS Daring was given a 'satisfactory' by the exacting folk of FOST, HMS Gloucester sailed back to Portsmouth with the words 'very satisfactory' ringing in the ears of the crew.

FOSTies don't hand those out willy-nilly. In fact, as befits her proud nickname, the Fighting G possesses "fighting spirit" according to her assessors who put the 25-year-old destroyer through eight weeks of pain.

They threw everything in the Bible at the ship – fire, flood, pestilence (well, chemical warfare) – and a few things which aren't: low-flying aircraft, terrorists, evacuations, submarines.

And come what may, some of the Fighting Gs actually enjoyed the experience.

"It was amazing having the live aircraft to target; it was always a competition to see it first, and sometimes they were so fast that there was just seconds for the whole system to react – it felt fantastic when we started to get it right every time," said AB Simon 'Shiner' Wright on the Port Directional Aid System, providing look-out and targeting for the 4.5in gun and even Sea Dart missile system.

CPO Mickey Hicks and PO Dan Liptrott charted the ops room's journey from the beginning of OST.

"It was a rough ride at times," said CPO Hicks. "You rely on 45 people in here all to do their job to fight the war. It was painful at the beginning, but then it began to click into place. You started to get a good feeling."

PO Liptrott added: "Where performance exceeds ambition, the overlap is called the ops room!"

The teams fighting fires and floods inside the ship might have disagreed...

No matter how successfully the ops room fought off attackers, the FOST 'wreckers' still gave the damage teams a work-out.

Fires adjacent to magazines, floods in crucial technical compartments, loss of all internal communications – were all in a day's 'light entertainment'.

It was no wonder then that a little bit of cat-and-mouse developed with the ship's company when the FOSTies tried to find places to charge their smoke machines...

"The exercises just flew by," said deputy marine engineer officer Lt Paul Embleton, who was in charge of the Forward Fire and Repair Party. "They were manic. There were points when I was looking at my incident board and laughing, there was so much on it. There was a lot of thinking – my head hurt afterwards!"

Bumps, bruises and gaffes are par for the course through OST. In eight weeks of fires, floods, humanitarian crises and general all hell breaking loose, the ship certainly had its ups and downs.

The principal warfare officer (underwater) realised after he piped that Gloucester didn't actually have a starboard seabat, and one sailor learned literally

the hard way that shoring on a hatch into a flooded compartment really does need to be rock-solid when he stood too close to some collapsing timber – but thankfully no real harm done.

Highlights of the two months included the non-warfighting exercises: non-combatant evacuation (NEO) operations and humanitarian disaster relief, not least because they allowed the ship's company to get above decks and enjoy some of the summer weather.

Gloucester's DISTEX (Disaster Relief Exercise) was conducted in blazing sunshine, resulting in quite a few odd beret lines.

"Pretending that it was pouring with stormy rain was quite difficult when we were all slapping on sunscreen – but I wasn't complaining as it was rather easier dealing with my stretcher cases," said medical officer Surg Lt Sonia Pillai.

Her team became dab hands with some horrible injuries in very inconvenient locations courtesy of the FOSTies' imagination.

As well as the infamous trapped casualties, there were plenty of hose-lifts and stretcher-carries onboard to keep everybody exercised.

"A few first aiders are now swearing that they will have to spend the deployment developing bigger 'guns', to cope with some of the heftier members of the ship's company," said Lt Cdr Eleanor Webb, the Fighting G's logistics officer.

The writers (*phew, we can call them that again* – Ed) even managed to achieve some action paperwork.

Not content with being a whole-ship 'strength' as HQ1 incident board operator, LWtr Neil 'Taff' Evans was, in his own words, "all over" the NEO registration "like a rash".

Meanwhile, the chefs just kept their heads down and everybody fed.

"People kept turning the kit off, but if you don't open on time, you can't exactly give everyone else grief across the counter, so you're never going to let that happen," said Chef Louis Walsh.

Of the whole OST experience, CO Cdr David George said: "FOST has done exactly what it's supposed to – get us to operational capability."

"It's been bloody at times, but actually the ship's spirit is such that nothing was too much for it. I've seen some tired faces around the last few weeks, but never once a head down or shoulders slumped."

"I'm immensely proud of my sailors for what they have achieved... And yes, I'm very glad it's over! It's time to go home, get some rest, and get ready to deploy."

The man passing judgment on the Fighting G's performance, former CO and now FOST Director South, Capt Malcolm Cree, addressed the ship's company after their final inspection: "My team has been particularly impressed."

"You've been enthusiastic, you've been receptive, you've provided that individual professionalism, and the most common comment from my staff has been about your teamwork and your fighting spirit."

All of which should stand the destroyer in good stead; later this year she heads to the South Atlantic on a seven-month deployment, taking over from HMS Portland.



Ten Tors earns its stripes

IT IS the 50th year of the Ten Tors Challenge, and once again the men and women of the Royal Navy were on hand to ensure the smooth running of the event and the safe transport of the injured, media and visitors across the dramatic landscape of Dartmoor.

This year two Sea King HC4s and one Lynx Mk7 from 848 and 847 Naval Air Squadrons respectively pitched up with all their essential personnel and supplies to ensure the safe flow of 2,400 young people over open moorland.

The Commando Helicopter Force have a long-established relationship with the event which calls upon teams of six to traverse 35, 45 or 55 miles of Dartmoor.

However that crossing of the moors is sometimes hampered by heavy rain and even snow, and often by a shroud of mist or low cloud.

And once again this year the jungles could well have been named misties, and the Sea King painted for last year's 40th anniversary in dark and white stripes was rather suitable for the cloud-striated background.

The CHF team arrived at Okehampton Camp on the Thursday at the start of the event, and set to work getting the 19 Tors ready to be manned over the weekend.

Each Tor had a six-man team of military personnel from all three Services, with at least one medic and one

comms expert; and this year 35 Royal Navy personnel were on hand manning eight of the 19 checkpoint Tors.

The Naval team on Hound Tor – Lt Paul Evans, Cdr Iain Whyte, CPO Paul Jayes and CPO Neilson McCready – processed nearly 200 teams over the course of the weekend, including a veterans' team drawn from people who had tackled the first Ten Tors event in 1960.

In addition the Saturday featured the Jubilee Challenge, where individuals or teams of youngsters with disabilities tackle the course, assisted by an Officer Cadet from the Exeter University Officer Training Corps.

A Lynx Mk 7 of 847 NAS did the day running between Yeovilton and Okehampton due to the ash risk from the volcanic eruptions in Iceland.

The Lynx may not have the troop-carrying ability, but it leaps ahead of its Sea King brethren in the CHF with its speed – which means that it can be anywhere within the 368 square miles of Dartmoor National Park within 15 minutes of being airborne.

It was Lt Jerry Gilmore of 848 Naval Air Squadron who was tasked with bringing the CHF to Okehampton.

He said: "It's good to support the event and it makes a change to the normal flying routine.

"As instructors we at 848 usually fly 30 hours a month but we are expecting to fly 50 hours with both cabs over the weekend.

Lt Gilmore added: "It's a lot of flying sometimes in challenging weather conditions which can be tiring, but Dartmoor is excellent for training as its large featureless expanse is similar to current areas of operation for the Commando Helicopter Force."

As the event runs over the weekend, with the entrants carrying their own equipment and camping out overnight, the organisers insist that upon the call-out for a casualty evacuation or search and rescue, a crew must be airborne within 30 minutes during the day and 60 minutes at night.

In reality the Navy crews are in the air within ten minutes, so regardless of the heightened volcanic ash risk the Sea Kings remained at Okehampton for the full duration.

In the space of five hours on the Saturday, the squadron had picked up five casualties, flown numerous Tor replenishment flights, and VIP and media flights.

And for the weary-but-determined walkers, the sight of the CHF Sea Kings and Lynx flying overhead provided reassurance that help was on hand if needed.

The Naval fliers also took advantage of occasional opportunities in between the tasking to offer experience flights to Sea, Army and Air Cadets, and give them an introduction to the CHF way of life.

Over the course of the Sunday, the teams notched up their final miles – and the event's patron, the Duke of Edinburgh, was at Okehampton Camp to see some of the teams' cross the finish line.

And as the teams came home, so did the checkpoint personnel and all their gear – by means of the CHF Sea Kings which spent the afternoon collecting people, and loading up their gear, to bring back to camp.

The men and women of CHF began heading back on the Sunday night, and the Sea Kings made the journey home to Yeovilton on the Monday morning.

Once more the military, and the Royal Navy, had ensured the success of the Ten Tors Challenge.

■ With many thanks to Nick Newns for words and picture



Picture: Nick Newns

Afghan tale inspires Deep ride

SUBMARINER Jason Floyd and his friend Richard Ambrose had always wanted to do a marathon motorbike ride. But it was only after listening to Jason's brother talking about his experiences in Afghanistan that their dream developed a serious purpose.

Petty Officer Jason, an instructor at the RN Submarine School in HMS Raleigh, learned all about his brother's experiences when Philip, a captain in the Royal Military Police, returned home.

Jason explained: "Philip recently returned from Afghanistan where his regiment lost three men."

"Taking part in a bike ride from Land's End to John O'Groats is something I've always wanted to do and I realised that while we fulfilled our dream, we would also do our bit to raise money for a very worthy cause."

Jason, 39, left his home in Eggbuckland, near Plymouth, at the end of May with Richard and Richard's son, Matthew, 12, who rode pillion on the six-day 1,788 mile ride.

The first leg saw the team head to Land's End and back to Plymouth. After a night's rest at home, the bikers spent Saturday travelling to Dumfries and then made their way to Loch Ness, before heading south with stopovers at Dalwhinnie and the Lake District.

Jason said after the ride: "The roads were fantastic and everywhere we stopped, people gave us money when they saw what we were raising funds for."

He added: "We were saddlesore at the end but it was definitely worth it."

All the money raised will go to Help for Heroes. Please go to www.bmycharity.com/landsendtojohnogroats2010 to donate.

Memories of Mac

CHRIS Macbean was a helicopter pilot who served for more than 20 years, rose to Lieutenant Commander and became senior pilot at 771 Squadron in Culdrose, where he flew hundreds of Search and Rescue sorties.

When he left the Navy, Chris joined Devon and Cornwall Constabulary as a Crime Scene Technician, where he became one of the team's mainstays and most popular men.

"Anyone who knew Chris Macbean will tell you he was one of life's true gentlemen and one of the most helpful and understanding people you could ever meet," said colleague Chris Halliday.

Chris Macbean died of cancer in May 2009 and two of his colleagues in the police, Chris Halliday and Rob Wintle, were setting off, as *Navy News* went to press, to cycle from HMS Victory, in Portsmouth, along the south coast to the constabulary's headquarters in Exeter, to raise money for the charity Hospiscare.

"We wanted to do something positive in Chris' memory so our challenge as two ordinary, unfit, ageing blokes is to cycle the 150-mile route in less than 24 hours," explained Chris.

To donate, or for further information, go to www.cycleforchrismac.co.uk

We will endure

GYM for Heroes is running its first endurance campaign from July 24 to 30 in support of Help for Heroes.

The campaign is a nationwide challenge held in fitness centres and gyms. Many military gyms have already joined in.

To take part and register your own gym or fitness centre, military or civilian, visit the website: www.gymforheroes.com.

Triumph for the fliers

EVERY self-respecting biker has a dream at some point in his or her life to ride the length and breadth of the UK.

That's the view of CPO Phil 'Frog' Spencer, from 800 Naval Air Squadron, who was turning his dream into reality as *Navy News* went to press.

Phil hatched his idea after the bikers' magazine *Ride* visited RAF Cottesmore, home of the Naval Strike Wing, to take pictures of men and machines.

After talking to *Ride* about his dream, an idea started to take shape in Phil's mind – why not cover the UK with a 'point-to-point' ride, instead of the usual north-south route?

And so the Point-to-Point Charity Motorcycle Ride was born, designed to cover the significant points of the compass by visiting UK military establishments of all three services from RAF Lossiemouth in the north to Portsmouth in the south.

Triumph Motorcycles generously agreed to lend four bikes for the ride, and Nissan GB supplied two support vehicles, with other companies chipping in to help the fund-raising effort for Help for Heroes.

The nine riders were due to leave RAF Cottesmore on the



● Left to right: CPO Phil 'Frog' Spencer, CPO Tony Fisher, PO Paul Fitzjohn, PO Dave Robson, LAET Craig Gilbert, LAET Stephen Church, LAET Wayne Drake, AET Dom Fraser-Shaw, AET Mark Franklin

first leg of their journey in the middle of June, aiming to visit Colchester Garrison, Woolwich Barracks, the Royal Gurkha Rifles in Folkestone, HMS Sultan, RNAS Culdrose, RAF Valley, BAE Warton, RAF Lossiemouth, RM Condor, Catterick Garrison and back to RAF Cottesmore in

time for the traditional Naval 'tea and stickies.'

They also hoped to make stops at two of the biggest beneficiaries for Help for Heroes – Selly Oak Hospital and Headley Court.

To donate, go to www.helpforheroes-pointtopoint.webs.com

Rich whistles down the wind

BY the time this edition of *Navy News* hits the streets, Lt Cdr Rich Wild (pictured in training right) might have crossed northern England from the Irish Sea to the North Sea in pursuit of a plate of fish and chips – or might not.

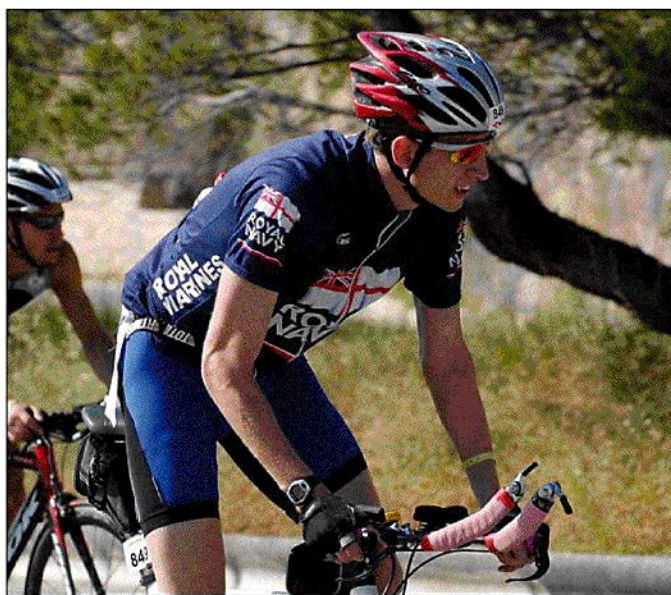
It all depended on the prevailing wind, for ideally Rich, Logistics Officer of HMS Ambush, was hoping for a good tailwind before pedalling off on his 175-mile bike ride from Walney Island, near Barrow, to Whitby in Yorkshire.

Rich, whose boat HMS Ambush is currently under construction in BAE's shipyard in Barrow, was going to extreme lengths to raise money for charity and get his supper.

His plan was to cycle from Walney to Whitby in one day, aiming to get there in time for a portion of the fish and chips for which the Yorkshire town is renowned. (Also for its links with Dracula, but the Count apparently was not such a magnet...)

Rich's route would be very challenging, rising initially through the southern Lake District then turning over the Pennines and crossing the North York Moors before descending into Whitby.

The route reaches a maximum height above sea level of more than 1,728ft but Rich reckoned the astounding scenery along the



way should be enough to motivate him – along with the promise of supper, of course.

Rich did not choose a specific date in July, and was hoping to make a decision based on the weather forecast – ideally a strong tailwind would help things along, but otherwise he was going to settle for warm and dry weather.

The charities Rich is raising money for are Help for Heroes and the Prince and Princess of Wales Hospice in Glasgow.

He has set up online donation pages at: www.justgiving.com/richard-wild-h4h-w2w and www.justgiving.com/rich-wilds-walney2wear-ppwh and is hoping to raise £1,000.



L of a challenge for T45 team

NOT content to rest on their laurels after completing the Collingwood assault course last year, members of the Type 45 Destroyer Charity Team travelled north to make this year's fund-raising event even more of a challenge.

The eight-strong team (pictured above): Vicky Barr, Mark Burley, Ian Hindmarsh, Steve Hiscox, Dave Moss, and the Navy contingent Cdr Steve Lynn, Lt

Cdr Dave Mackie and WO1 Barry Stafford, plus their support crew, Paul Maynard, travelled to the Lake District to undertake a three-stage challenge in a single day.

The team rowed the entire 10.5-mile length of the lake from Fellfoot, the southernmost part, to Waterhead in the north, then trekked from the shore to Langdale and on to the base of England's loftiest peak – Scafell Pike.

They subsequently climbed 3,209 feet to its summit, before descending for some well-deserved rest, recuperation and substantial quantities of pub-grub.

The aim of the Lakes Longest and Loftiest – the L3 Challenge – was to raise funds for the Solent Multiple Sclerosis Therapy Centre, a charity in Portsmouth.

Go to www.justgiving.com/L3-Challenge to donate.



● The Help for Heroes cyclists on the Big Battlefield Bike Ride
Pictures: Sgt Ian Forsyth RLC

Bay crossing for cyclists

MORE than 300 Help for Heroes cyclists returned home from an emotional bike ride across northern France, where they remembered WW2 veterans.

During their journey the riders visited some of the most poignant memorials and towns of World Wars 1 and 2, including St Valery en Caux, where two of the cyclists laid the first wreaths to pay tribute to the soldiers at the Commonwealth War Grave Commission, and Fromelles, where a private wreath-laying took place.

Last year's bike ride went

on to raise £800,000 for H4H initiatives including Detherapy, a rehabilitation diving scheme, and the £20 million appeal to build a series of Personnel Recovery Centres across the UK.

This year the organisers hoped to raise £1 million to continue these and other projects. At the end of the route, the riders joined many veterans to pay tribute to those evacuated and killed at Dunkirk in 1940.

After a beach memorial and town parade, the riders spent the night on RFA Largs Bay before returning to Dover.



● A landing craft comes ashore from RFA Largs Bay for the Help for Heroes cyclists

No chance for feet to freeze in Arctic

COUSINS Kirk Boyle and Wayne Middleton travelled to the land of the midnight sun to take part in an arctic marathon.

Kirk, lieutenant commander in the RNR, and Wayne, a Lt Cdr in the RN, chose the charity Combat Stress, the Ex-Services Mental Welfare Society, because between them they have served numerous operational tours in Northern Ireland, Bosnia, Kosovo and both Gulf Wars, and seen the huge increase in demand for its services.

Kirk said: "Many veterans

wait too long before seeking help.

"In particular, the realisation that more veterans from the Falklands have subsequently committed suicide than were killed in the conflict made us realise how much this charity is needed."

The cousins flew out to northern Norway the day before the marathon, which was held around midnight in the middle of June, when it was still broad daylight in the Arctic Circle.

To donate go to www.justgiving.com/arcticmarathon

Tough tally at Tal-y-bont

AFTER the success of last year's inaugural Beacons Challenge, staff at the Outdoor Leadership Training Centre Tal-y-bont, a part of Powerful Squadron RNLA, Britannia Royal Naval College Dartmouth, set about planning the 2010 event under the leadership of PO Mark Reynolds.

The format was the same as the previous event – a gruelling three-discipline adventure race set over two days in the heart of the Brecon Beacons, with a mountain navigational exercise, a mountain bike trail and an open canoe course.

Six teams took up the challenge, two from BRNC and one each from HMS Kent, HMS Edinburgh, Portsmouth Area and DES Ensleigh. The overall winners were Officer Cadets of BRNC 1.

More than £850 was raised for the RNRMC.

This event has proved to be a resounding success in its second year and will continue to grow with strength year on year, so if you are up for a challenge and think your team has got what it takes, contact rnla-oltc-staff@btconnect.com

Auspicious

NOW this is something you don't see every day.

That's right, it's a Peruvian submarine. And arrayed behind it an international panoply of maritime power as Britain's flagship naval deployment of 2010 knuckles down to business.

BAP (*Buque Armada Peruana* – Peruvian Naval Ship) Angamos leads (*from left to right*) USS Mahan, USNS Leroy Grumman, USS Robert G Bradley, HMS Sutherland, Auriga flagship HMS Ark Royal, RFA Fort George, HMS Liverpool, USS Barry and USS Carr.

This wonderful sight off the Eastern Seaboard of the United States was captured by one member of Ark's two-strong photographic section, LA(Phot) Gregg Macready, who was hanging out of a Lynx Mk3 from 815 Naval Air Squadron.

"We were very fortunate with the weather and the sea state which added up to being able to capture an impressive show of force," says Gregg.

And, one might add, we were fortunate to have such a skilled lensman in the back of a cab...

Much as pretty pictures are (a) very nice and (b) fill the pages of this newspaper, Auriga isn't about photo opportunities.

"Events such as the photographic exercise provide a clear visual representation of the kind of power available to the strike group commander," explains Cdr Simon Ward, chief of staff of the Auriga force's commander, Cdre Simon Ancona.

"The ability to seamlessly integrate and operate with our main coalition ally is one of the key aims of the Auriga deployment."

And that explains why a dozen US Marine Corps Harriers set down on **Ark Royal's** flight deck for the early stages of Auriga.

The jets – AV8B variants from Marine Air Group 14 based at Cherry Point, North Carolina – planned up to 70 sorties a day aboard Ark.

So they needed a few maintainers and staff officers as well as the pilots – 140 personnel in all.

The Marines – their aircraft emblazoned with the Corps' legendary motto *Semper fidelis* (always faithful) – spent a fortnight aboard Ark.

"Ark Royal is a fantastic ship with a profound history – I felt privileged to be onboard representing the US Marine Corps," said Col Russell Sanborn, MAG 14's Commanding Officer.

With all these zoomies on board, there's a fair bit of work for Ark's met office. For most of the past decade, the weather forecasters on the carrier haven't been overly bothered about what happens above 5,000ft.

With the carrier devoted to helicopter operations... and helicopter operations generally conducted below 5,000ft, there wasn't a great deal of need to look at higher altitudes.

As Ark's now replaced *Illustrious* as the Harrier carrier, that's all changed.

The meteorological department is expected to produce extremely detailed forecasts all the way up to 40,000ft.

Indeed, the forecaster is expected to give two full aviation forecasts every day and up to 20 operation briefs. There are also bespoke forecasts

for anti-submarine operations and specific aerial missions. And there's a longer-term forecast too covering the next 48 hours.

When Ark's at flying stations, one of the junior observers, such as AB Grace Jones, takes readings every hour: air temperature, relative humidity, wave height, swell, visibility, cloud cover, cloud height. "A sea bucket or Sonar 2013 is used to observe the sea surface temperature," AB Jones adds. "It's used to calculate survival times in the event of a possible aircraft ditching or man overboard."

And you have to keep a close eye on electric storms and static discharges. Aside from being very very frightening, thunderbolts and lightning pose grave danger to aircraft and bring a halt to all refuelling.

All the readings, observations and data gathered helps generate a 'colour code'. Red is bad, obviously. Green, however, is not the best; fliers under training can't fly in weather worse than 'green', for example. No, colour code blue is the one all fliers are hoping for.

All in all, says Ark's senior meteorologist Lt Cdr Andy Jacob, "it's an assignment one aspires to – where you can prove your worth in one of the most challenging forecasting environments that a Royal Navy forecaster can be expected to work."

Meanwhile aboard **HMS Sutherland**...

Britain's most potent frigate (Sonar 2087, Merlin, the latest version of Seawolf) was chasing submarines – the Type 23's *raison d'être* when they were designed in the '80s although they've since

evolved into more general-purpose warships.

2087 gives the hunter the edge over the hunted (it's widely touted by British boffins as the best anti-submarine sonar out there). Add Merlin to the mix and, hey presto, bye bye submarine...

...as a delegation from the US Navy discovered when they spent some time with F81.

"Sonar 2087 and the Merlin helicopter combined with the Royal Navy's enhanced doctrine has resulted in Sutherland making a genuinely positive impression on the United States Navy," says Sutherland's CO Cdr John Payne.

"They are very keen to understand our niche skill set and are clearly interested in what the Royal Navy and UK industry has to offer."

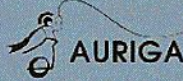
The frigate then broke away from the task group and made for Baltimore for a Defence and Security Industry Day.

British industries used the warship as a stage for their wares, while more than 3,000 Baltimoreans (*not a made-up word, we looked it up – Ed*) took the rare opportunity to visit a British frigate.

Sutherland rounded off a highly-beneficial visit by returning a salute to US Fort McHenry with a local piper embarked – a fitting tribute to US Memorial Day.

On rejoining the Auriga group Sutherland engaged agile remote-controlled targets (a few steps up from the RN's inflatable 'killer tomatoes') directed by Canadian frigate HMCS Montréal.

The gunnery practice proved an excellent test of Sutherland's newly-installed Automated Small Calibre Gun, ultimately resulting in the drones being neutralised.



beginnings

The ship's submarine hunting skills once more came to the fore during a successful ship-controlled, air-delivered prosecution of a simulated submarine by a dummy torpedo launched from her Merlin.

All work and no play is not good for long term morale and balance was restored with the ship's company taking time to enjoy the warm waters of the Eastern Seaboard for a 'hands to bathe'.

We left **RFA Fort George** last month with (1) a rather tacky tiger-print RAS-ing flag courtesy of **814 Naval Air Squadron** and (2) a depleted supply of crisps courtesy of a shortage aboard Sutherland.

Well, the flag's still there, as are the Flying Tigers.

"Operating in the mid-Atlantic was a first for some and certainly concentrated the mind towards the end of a long mission in the black of night," said Tigers' CO Cdr Darran Goldsmith.

Aside from hunting those pesky submarines, the Merlins have been conducting some rare – and enjoyable – air-to-submarine winching. Enjoyable that is unless you're the one dangling on the end of the wire. Among those dangles was one Cdre Simon Ancona...

As for the crisps (aka potato chips on this side of the Pond), well they'll take some depleting. The floating warehouse carries enough food to produce meals for 100,000 people... or 100,000 meals for one person.

Also aboard is sufficient diesel to fill up 166,660 cars... or sail nearly three times around the equator (if that were humanly possible...).

Despite such vast supplies, the Auriga force is doing its best to drain Fort George.

Sutherland, Ark and Liverpool are thirsty beasts, so too the USS Barry. And as for the food...

"Ark, swelled by 143 hungry US Marines, required feeding and RFA Fort George was on hand to supply," said her CO Capt Dale Worthington RFA.

"Vegetables, frozen goods, soft drinks among other things – in many ways similar to a (very large) weekly shop.

"The only difference was that of quantity. When was the last time you popped into a supermarket for ten tons of potatoes?"

Back on a potato-laden Ark...

The USMC pilots – including one Lt Ralph Wood RN on exchange with the *Semper Fi* guys – got their first taste of the 'ski ramp' which helps them skywards (it's something US warships don't possess).

They carried out attacks on Ark's target (not as grandiose as the Canadian drones – just a towed affair) and defended the carrier against incoming attack.

In their first week aboard, the Americans managed 160 sorties (not quite the 70-a-day) and qualified 22 pilots for operations on a British flat-top.

"I've been massively impressed by the skill and capability of the US Marine Corps aviation personnel," enthused Cdr 'Rocky' Salmon, Ark's Commander Air. "They – and we – have achieved so much."

Another relatively unusual sight on Ark's flight

deck are two Mk3 Lynx of **212 Flight, 815 NAS**.

The Flight was attached to HMS Endurance... but with the Red Plum out of action following her near-sinking 18 months ago, the helicopters are being put to good use elsewhere.

The Lynx are averaging about 50 hours a month on general duties – anything from force protection to ferrying sailors, supplies and mail around.

It's keeping the Flight "up to speed" as observer Lt Martin Ormshaw puts it and it also offers a little variety...

"The team in Ark Royal have been absolutely fantastic," says pilot Lt Paul 'Ellers' Ellerton.

"We are all really pleased to be operating from the flagship's deck with US Marine Corps Harriers, Sea King and Merlin helicopters, in addition to the variety of visiting American aircraft."

And now for just a bit more variety...

Exit USMC stage left.

Enter **RAF 1(F) Squadron** stage right.

After 143 Americans had shuffled down Ark's gangway, 116 RAF and RN personnel (like all elements of Joint Force Harrier it's a mixblob of Junior and Senior Service personnel) from the jump jet squadron shuffled on.

Flight Deck Officer Lt Paul 'Mo' Morris and his team guided the six Harrier GR9s safely aboard.

"Flying Control, way up in the island, 'bring them in' over the headset comms, but I make it my responsibility to personally welcome each pilot to the Ark Royal team," he says.

Which is jolly nice of him.

The Cottesmore-based Harriers are aboard Ark for eight weeks for the crux of Auriga.

They sailed with the carrier initially for the US exercise area off Florida, Virginia and North Carolina (*that would be quite a large exercise area, then – Ed*) for the 'safe to operate' phase of their training. As the title suggests, the fliers qualify in landing and taking off from a warship punching through the high seas.

Once that was done, there was time for a little 'showing off' (not our words, but those of task group commander Cdre Ancona).

The RAF fliers laid on a show for 16 VIPs from the US Navy, Marine Corps and Department of Defense (the American equivalent of the MOD).

They joined 814 Merlins and 212 Flight's Lynx in the skies above the task group, while Cdre Ancona briefed the Americans on Britain's carrier strike programme and the Merlin-Sonar 2087 sucker punch to submarines.

"This was a great opportunity for us to demonstrate some of the capabilities which a British carrier strike group has – the Harrier GR9 and Merlin particularly," said Ark's CO Capt John Clink.

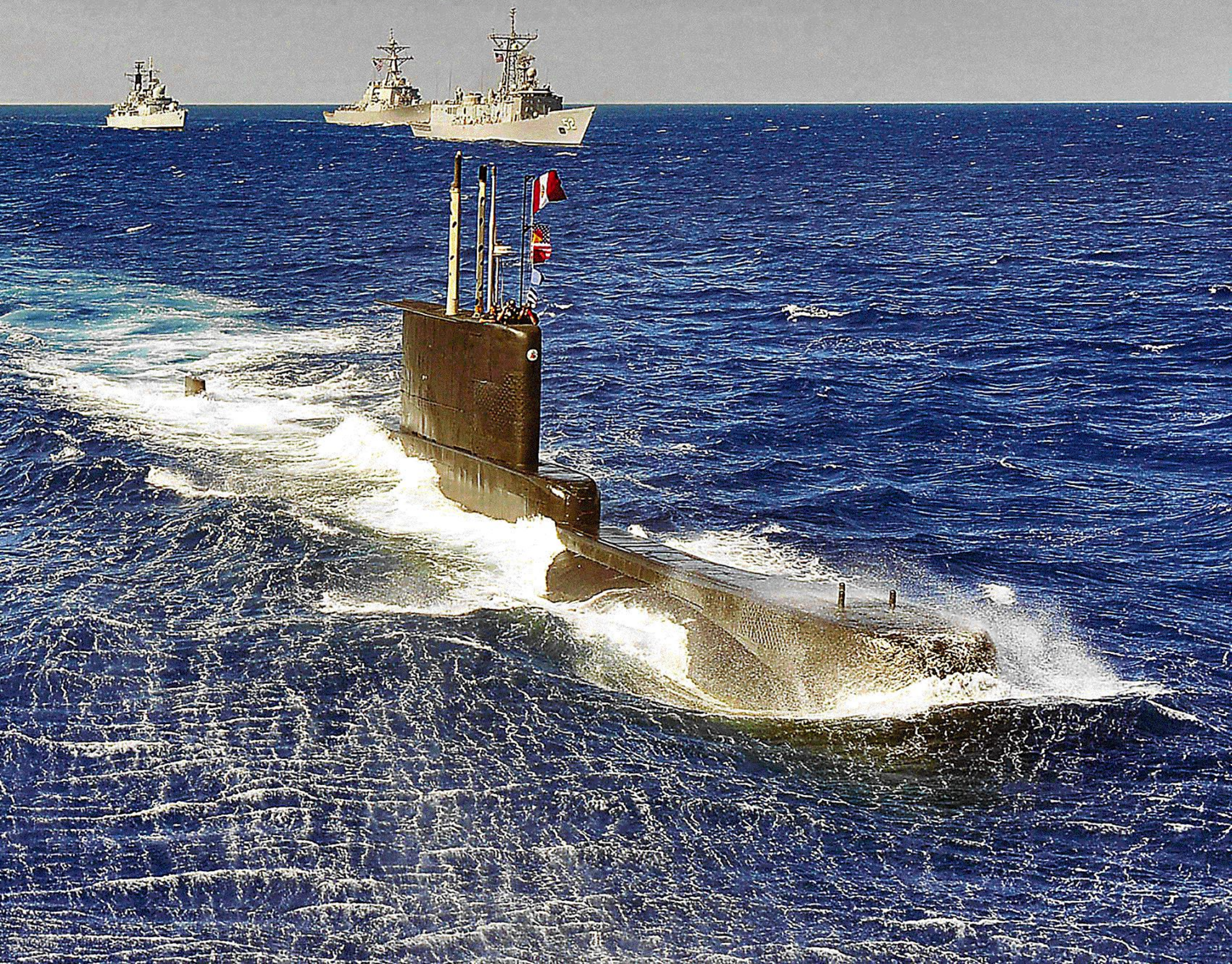
"Exercising off the American coast provides the perfect carrier gymnasium to enhance our skills."

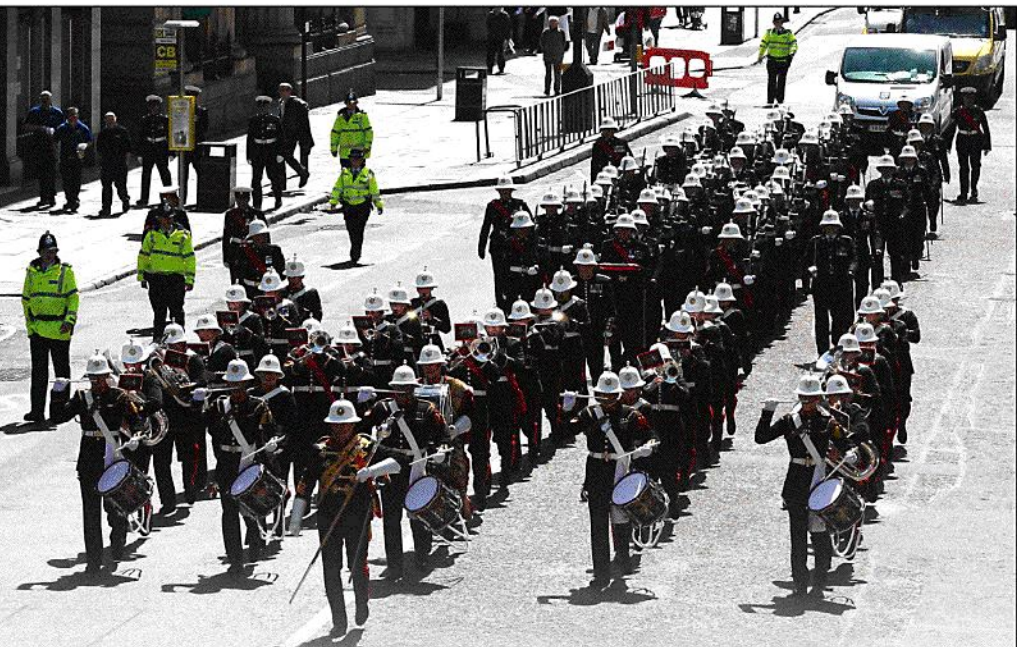
As *Navy News* went to press, the group had left the gym and was heading for Canada. Halifax, Nova Scotia, to be precise.

The British ships' presence was requested at the Canadian International Fleet Review, celebrating 100 years of the Commonwealth Navy which grew out of its much older 'mother'.

We'll have a report on that next month.

■ **Auriga sporting action, page 46**





Mersey marines honoured

THE 60th birthday year of berets on Merseyside ended aplomb as locals bestowed their highest civic honour on the Navy's elite infantrymen.

City officials in Liverpool granted the freedom of the great port city upon RMR Merseyside... freedom which was promptly celebrated by the part-time Royals with a march through the city.

At the head of that parade, appropriately, was the Band of HM Royal Marines.

Behind them came their reservist comrades with their new freedom scroll (pictured right) carefully rolled and placed on a plush red cushion and carried by a Royal Marine ahead of the marching platoon.

The march followed a service at the Church of Our Lady and Saint Nicholas.

The commandos paraded past the Liver Building and along the Strand before heading to the town hall for a reception.

RMR Merseyside began as the (snappily-

green with titled) Merseyside Centre Royal Marine Forces Voluntary Reserve back in 1949 aboard HMS Irwell at Morpeth Dock in Birkenhead.

Irwell has long gone... as has the Merseyside Centre Royal Marine Forces Voluntary Reserve. The latter has rematerialised as RMR Merseyside at East Brunswick Dock in the newish naval regional headquarters; it has detachments in Manchester, Nottingham and Birmingham.

"From our formation 60 years ago, the role of the reservist has changed immeasurably," said Commanding Officer Lt Col Rory Bruce.

"The original relatively benign and rather blunt training has been honed over the decades to a commando dagger-like sharpness, which has enabled reservists across the unit to deploy on almost continuous operations over the last decade."

In an average year, around 100 commando reservists from Merseyside – four-fifths of the unit's trained strength – deploy alongside their full-time Corps comrades.



Pictures: LA(Phot) Simmo Simpson, FRPU East

Rocks of ages

MEMORIES may fade, but deeds are immortal.

With the sun beginning its descent on an early winter's afternoon, Cdr Mike Knott and former Royal Marine 'Curly' Elstow read the inscriptions on wreaths left around a cairn on Pebble Island.

The simple pile of rocks and white wooden cross are the monument to the men of HMS Coventry, lost a dozen or so miles from this spot on Pebble Island in the Falklands 28 years ago.

In 1982, Curly was a green beret serving as coxswain of one of HMS Broadsword's sea boats.

The frigate was sailing in company with destroyer Coventry, acting as forward pickets to protect the bulk of the invasion force in Falkland Sound from Argentine air attack.

May 25 – Argentina's national day and Curly Elstow's 22nd birthday – was a day of maximum effort by the *Fuerza Aerea Argentina*.

After downing two Skyhawks with Coventry's Sea Darts, the two ships came under sustained attack from low-level Argentine bombers. Broadsword was struck by one 1,000lb bomb which bounced off the ocean, through the flight deck and wrecked the Lynx, but did not explode.

Coventry was not so fortunate. She was struck by two 1,000-pounders. Both detonated, wrecking the computer room, operations room and both engine rooms. Within 20 minutes, the destroyer capsized and sank.

Curly Elstow pulled 37 survivors from the South Atlantic, plus five lost souls; in all nineteen men were killed, plus MEM Paul Mills who died nearly a year afterwards as a result of injuries sustained.

A generation later, and now retired from the Corps, Curly joined the ship's company of HMS Portland for a memorial service over Coventry's wreck; the destroyer lies on her side in around 350ft of water.

Following the service aboard the Type 23 frigate, on a six-month South Atlantic deployment upholding Britain's commitment to the Falklands, Cdr Knott, Curly and a few ship's company flew ashore to the Coventry monument.

"Curly's first-hand account of the action that resulted in the loss of the Coventry – and his frank description of the realities of conflict at sea – made the memorial service a particularly poignant event," said Cdr Knott.

"He also gave a spellbinding slideshow presentation, revealing his memories of the Falkland's conflict, candidly relating the realities of conflict at sea from his perspective as a young Royal Marine who's own ship was bombed."

Earlier, in company with HMS Clyde, Portland's sailors headed to San Carlos and a service of remembrance at Blue Beach Cemetery to men lost during the landings at this bleak spot in 1982.

There are a few men of 1982 still serving in the Royal Navy of 2010, among them Clyde's CPO Brumfield and Portland's PO(AWT) John Moody; although not present at the landings, both sailors were involved in the aftermath of the conflict serving aboard HM Ships Liverpool and Sirius respectively.

For Portland, the tributes to the islands' liberators 28 years ago continued in the capital Stanley, with sailors paying their respects at the Liberation Monument. Pictured below are ET(ME) Joey Legetta, LCH Sam Neil and POET(ME) Emmanuel Hardman reading the names of the Royal Navy's fallen on the memorial.



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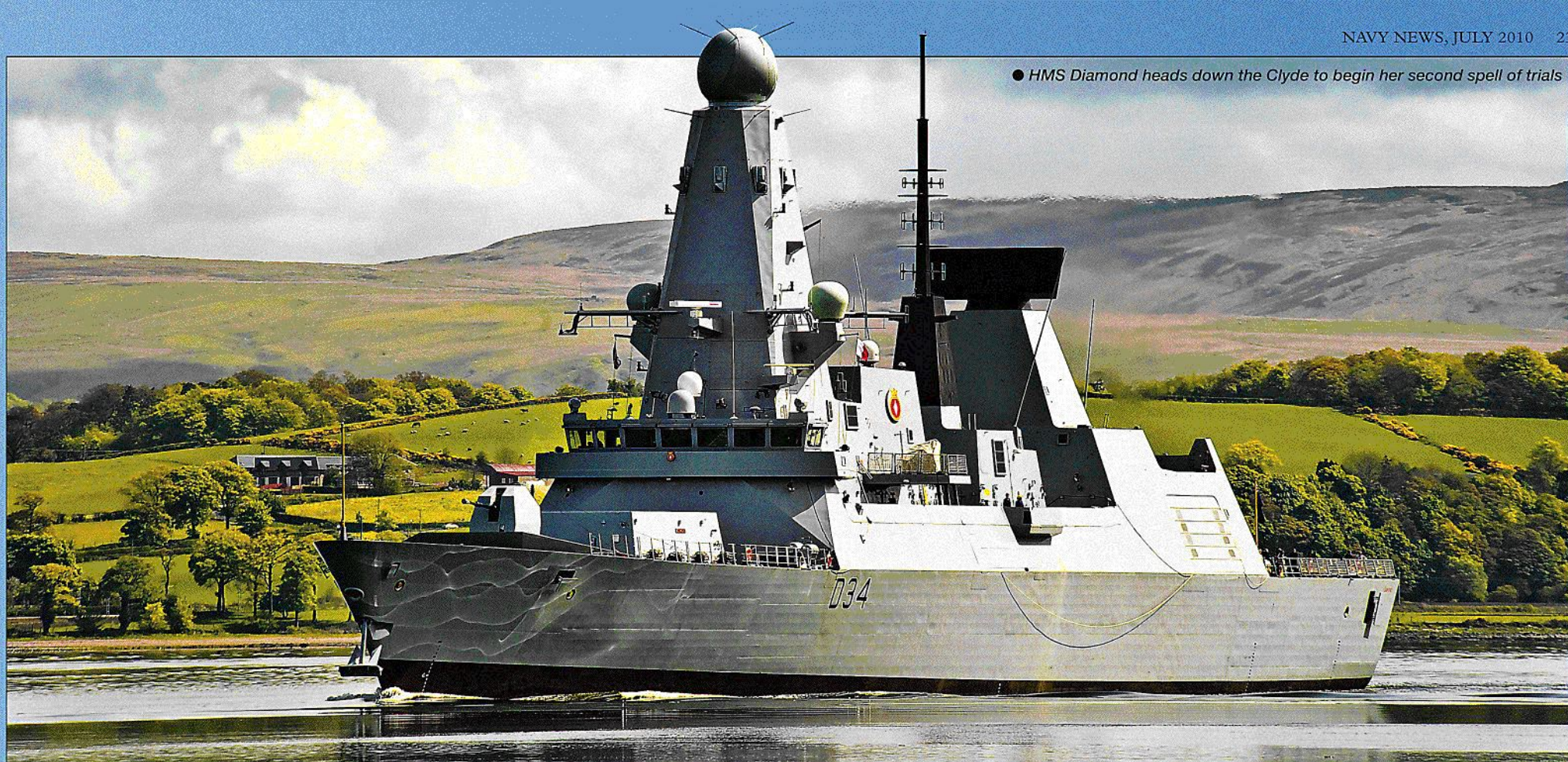
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● HMS Diamond heads down the Clyde to begin her second spell of trials

3 x 45 = the future

IF YOU'RE struggling to comprehend the sight of two imposing Type 45 destroyers alongside in Portsmouth Naval Base, well here's news for you: there'll soon be three.

The third of Britain's next-generation £1bn warships has successfully completed her second set of trials and is now gearing up for moving into her future home.

Diamond's due to swap the Clyde for Portsmouth in mid-September, when the Blue Ensign will be lowered and the White Ensign hoisted in its place as the destroyer is formally handed over to the Royal Navy...

... by which time one of her two already-complete sisters will be off on her first mini-deployment (that's Daring)... and the other will be firing Sea Viper – the class' main armament – for the first time (that's Dauntless).

More about those later, for now we'll let Diamond sparkle (groan – Ed).

Type 45 No.3's second set of sea trials saw the normal ship's complement of 190 rise to 265...

... which in most destroyers or frigates would be a bit of a squeeze, but not with the extra accommodation on the D-class (there's space for some 60 troops in fairly rudimentary messes aboard).

Of those 265 men and women, just 49 were Royal Navy. The rest were merchant sailors, engineers, contractors and experts from BAE Systems, who built Diamond.

Typically on sea trials, RN personnel provide the bridge watchkeepers, sea boat coxswains and the fire/damage control party.

But with various extra tests being included in these 21 days of trials off the Scottish west coast, more matelots filed on board to help with evaluating kit as varied as comms, radars, sensors, the propulsion management system, flight deck fire-fighting kit, and the pre-wetting system (sprinklers which wash down the upper decks).

With Diamond's sea-handling and manoeuvring already proven on the first period of trials, the emphasis this time was on her combat and information systems.

With many of the leading contractors aboard, the ship's company were able to pick their brains about kit, share ideas and generally gain a greater understanding of the leap forward the equipment which the Type 45 is over the existing destroyer and frigate fleet.

Low-flying aircraft and surface targets were used in tests to demonstrate the accuracy of Diamond's radar and sensors while the destroyer's communication systems were also pushed to the limit and were tested in all configurations under demanding conditions.

Aside from the industry boffins and Type 45 experts, the trials were witnessed by the senior military figure in the land, Chief of Defence Staff Air Chief Marshal Sir Jock Stirrup, who spent an afternoon seeing what "Type 45 is all about" (shooting down aircraft, principally) and chatting to the sailors...

... as did the ship's sponsor,

Lady Johns, who spent the first day of the trials period (an unusually fine spring day in western Scotland we're told...) to see progress made since her previous visit and meet newer members of the ship's company.

Three weeks later, her ship was back alongside at BAE's yard in Scotstoun where Diamond will spend the summer preparing for the transfer to the South Coast.

"I was aware of the Type 45's abilities from my colleagues in Daring and Dauntless – but having experienced sea trials in Diamond I now fully appreciate the power and potential of these great ships," said Diamond's Cdr Paddy Munns, senior naval officer at the time of the trials (he's now her marine engineer officer with the arrival of Cdr Ian Clarke as the destroyer's Commanding Officer).

"The sea trials have been a great success. We now can't wait to move on board and take her to the next stage!"

... which older sister HMS Dauntless has already passed through.

On a glorious summer's day by the Solent, the second ship of the class was formally welcomed into the arms of the Royal Navy – 'christened' if you like – at her commissioning ceremony in Portsmouth Naval Base (pictured below).

Hundreds of families, friends and guests,

among them First Sea Lord Admiral Sir Mark Stanhope, Commander-in-Chief Fleet Admiral Sir Trevor Soar and Dauntless' sponsor Lady Burnell-Nugent heard Capt Richard Powell read out the formal commissioning warrant, while the Band of HM Royal Marines Collingwood provided suitably martial maritime music.

The ceremony closed with the traditional cutting of the commissioning cake by Capt Powell's wife Carolyn and the youngest person in her husband's charge, 17-year-old ET Robert Clough from North Wales.

The teenager was only two months out of training; given his age, Dauntless is not surprisingly his first ship. Not a bad place to begin your career...

"To be serving on a Type 45 destroyer so soon after training is like a dream come true – it is an amazing ship and it's such a good ship's company – everyone gets on really well," the young sailor effused.

His Commanding Officer was equally fulsome in his praise.

"This is a great day for the Royal Navy and particularly for the crew who are all delighted to serve in this fantastic ship," said Capt Powell.

"Sailing past the Round Tower and into the Naval Base aboard Dauntless was one of the proudest moments of my career and I am sure that the ship will continue to bring pride to the Royal Navy throughout her lifetime."

And what of the the lead ship of the class? Turn the page to find out...



Picture: LA(Phot) Arron Hoare, FRPU East

TYPE 45 ZONE... THE TYPE 45 ZONE... THE TYPE 45

Instant calm

WORLD War 2 has given us its fair share of aphorisms, maxims and quotes.

This was their finest hour... Fight them on the beaches... Date which will live in infamy... So much owed by so many to so few... End of the beginning... Awaken a sleeping giant...Dunkirk spirit... Keep calm and, er, carry on....

And it's only right that the most advanced warship Britain has ever sent to sea adopts one of them as her unofficial motto.

Yup, that's right. Keep calm and carry on.

As British as warm beer, a wet summer and a nice cup of tea.

And do you know what? It sums up perfectly what they're trying to do on HMS Daring. Take the best bits of the past and blend them with 21st-Century technology.

There's no other way of getting through the futuristic destroyer's toughest test to date: operational sea training.

Type 42s have been passing through FOST since the mid-70s. So too 22s. Carriers since the early 80s. 23s, well you get the picture...

In short, the ladies and gents of the Flag Officer Sea Training know the existing fleet like the back of their hands...

... and the ships passing through OST know exactly what to expect. It's all a well-worn routine.

Now mix things up a little with the first Type 45 to 'enjoy' OST.

Step-change in capability. Blah blah. Shoot down a cricket ball travelling at Mach 3. Blah blah. Eighty per cent of the kit is new to the Navy. Blah blah. iPod-generation warship. Blah blah.

It all makes things that little bit more exciting – for FOSTies and ship's company.

For the FOSTies there's a shiny new toy to play with. For Daring's crew there's the chance to show what they and their ship can do.

So what can a Type 45 do? Well, according to the blurb, it can track something in the region of 200 aerial targets simultaneously at ranges of up to 250 miles, and engage them once they're within about 50 miles of the ship.

So in theory, you could sit in the ops room of Plymouth, fire up the Sea Viper system, watch a Hawk lift off from Culdrose or Yeovilton, and hey presto, one aerial threat dispensed with.

But that would be too easy.

For a start, Sea Viper's not in automatic mode. "We like to have the human

element," explains FOSTie Lt Matt Hulse, "just as a check."

As with many of the FOST staff putting the Type 45 to the test, he's an ex-Daring, her former fighter controller to be precise.

The headphones of his successor Lt Alex Kopsahilis buzz not just with instructions from friendly aircraft but also spoof instructions and jamming from the enemy.

That's nothing new to warfare, but the three-screen display in front of the young officer is.

This is the 'Starship Enterprise' technology of which Type 45 sailors are so proud.

The display's full colour (not like the old orange displays in 42s). You can have various 'windows' open at any one time – the 4.5in gun camera, CCTV of the flight deck, a display showing the various heights of aircraft in the vicinity.

If you're expecting something X-Box or PlayStation-esque, forget it. It's blobs and dots on a screen. But they're coloured blobs (red for enemy, naturally...) and colour, says Lt Hulse, "makes all the difference".

So too does space. Darings refer not to the ops room but the ops complex. It's big. It's spacious. It's not pitch-black like traditional ops room. Yes, the team still wear anti-flash, headphones and stare at screens, but they can also look across the room at shipmates; they don't have to strain their necks and look behind them. "Seeing people's faces, the expressions in their eyes, that's important," says Lt Hulse.

But other aspects of the ops room will be instantly recognisable to 42, 22 and 23 sailors.

You'll still hear the shrill blast of a whistle.

Slameye. Slameye (Visual confirmation of a missile launch).

Followed not too long afterwards by... Brace brace brace.

ATHURSDAY WAR wouldn't be a Thursday War without a Hawk buzzing you, without the smell of smoke drifting through the passageways and compartments, without a pot mess for action messing, without sailors rushing around in feignought suits tackling fires or trying to plug holes in the hull with blocks and wedges.

"Computers only go so far," says logistics officer Lt Cdr Scott Bell. "When it comes to shoving in wedges, you need manpower."

And there's not a lot of manpower. In simple terms, Daring's twice the size of a Type 23 – but with the same sized ship's company (180-190 men and women).

In the event of a hit, it's Lt Cdr Bell's task to co-ordinate that manpower and patch up the damage.

Despite the very large computer screen in the ship control centre, you can't fit an entire schematic diagram of Daring on it – not at a high enough resolution.

"I actually prefer the old damage control boards," Lt Cdr Bell adds. "You can see everything at a glance." Luckily, they still have them on board...

Technology can only go so far. Sometimes you can't beat old-fashioned simplicity.

On the bridge wing, a sailor wanders past in full battle-rig, but with a mug clipped to his belt.

On the bridge itself, the day's various instructions and aims are scribbled on the large windows – rather like a head-up display on a Harrier.

At the day's end, Executive Warrant Officer WO1 Mark Barker does his rounds and hands out Mars bars – "it's good for morale."

In short the machine is nothing without the man (or woman) operating it.

"You can get blinded by the Starship Enterprise technology, but it boils down to young sailors in anti-flash in the ops room, listening to all that information over their headphones, looking at the screens," explains the senior FOSTie aboard today, Cdr Mike Utley.

"Without them, the kit won't work."

Which is why for four years, ship's company and FOST staff have been preparing for this day.

The FOSTies didn't just turn up on the first day of operational sea training; they've been involved with Daring since Day 1.

So too have the 'boffins on the hill' – aka scientists working with the mock-up Type 45 on Portsmouth Hill – and RN experts from the Maritime Warfare Centre at HMS Collingwood.

"Type 45 takes us to a whole new level of air defence – we're learning there are a lot more ways to skin a cat," says FOST's Lt Cdr Jez Tyler.

"Everyone at FOST has been dying to get Daring down here. For me as an air warfare officer it's like having a new toy to play with. I want to jump in the seat and have a go myself."

Sorry, but you can't. But you can help write the Type 45 instruction manual.

As with Daring herself, that manual takes tried and tested methods and adapts them to suit the Type 45's 21st-Century technology.

"You don't want to throw away the good stuff from the past – there are procedures still valid from a Type 42," Cdr Utley explains. "But we also want to make use of what a Type 45 can do."

THIS ISN'T THE full FOST experience for Daring. That comes (a) when the Sea Viper missiles are ready to fire and (b) when the ship's gearing up for her first deployment; (a) will be in the autumn (the honour of first firing falls to her sister Dauntless); (b) is about this time next year.

Still, a little FOST is more challenging than no FOST...

For a start there's the village of Old Grimsby on the island of Tresco which needs sorting out after a hurricane.

Old Grimsby bears a striking resemblance to Bull Point (oddly, as does Tresco itself...).

The poor people of ill-starred Old Grimsby (pop. 20 or so actors and a couple of plastic babies) suffer at least one calamity a week: tropical storm, volcano, earthquake, tsunami. Lucky there's always a warship on hand then...

In true Keep Calm and Carry On fashion, it's the mission of Daring to 'save life and lessen suffering'.

The sea boats – launched in true Thunderbirds-style from that Heath Robinson-esque 'grabber' – are sent ashore with medical, fire-fighting, rescue, and engineering teams to bring order to chaos.

Meanwhile, Lt Tom Knott and his yeoman stayed in one of the boats and surveyed the shoreline – the traditional way: swinging a lead line to measure the depth of water in various places to make a rudimentary chart area and assess the suitability for bringing a larger ship such as Daring alongside (although as it happened, she didn't go into 'Tresco').

While they were swinging the lead (literally rather than metaphorically), their shipmates were putting out fires, rescuing casualties, fixing the waterworks and cooking meals for the victims.

"All just another day at OST for Navy ships," said Lt Kopsahilis. "He tells us we have a good chance of doing this kind of thing for real..."

Indeed, it's much more likely fending off low-flying jets. Then again, *vis pacem, para bellum*...

OVER THE YEARS the Navy team has been through its fair share of Thursday Wars. They're edgy, fraught affairs. Raised voices. A bit of snapping. Occasionally some choice Anglo-Saxon.

So it's a bit odd to find Daring relaxed, then at least not stressed. Perhaps that's because they're not going through a full eight/nine-week spell at OST. Perhaps it's because they know the inside and out. Perhaps it's because they're blazing a trail. Perhaps all of the above.

"I don't think you can call this ship," enthuses ops manager CPO Dean Button.

We bumped into Barker, who prefers the sobriquet 'Legend'... last summer at Navy Days "living the dream. He's still living the dream and a half years into a six-month draft to Daring after more than a dozen years "walking around the room hunched-up" in Type 23s.

"This ship is awesome. The only thing I accept after Daring is my front room. *don't think that's on Drafty's list* – Ed Barker.

For Daring's 'father figure', it's the younger members of the ship's company who've really stood out at OST.

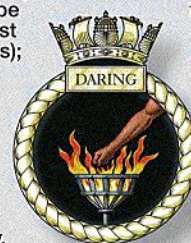
"The amount of hours and effort they've put in is tremendous. They've been at 5, 5.30am to get things right," says Barker.

They're doing it because they're fond of Daring's identity.

"We're setting the routine for the next 30 to 40 years," the EWO continues. "When I've left the Navy and am sitting at home, watching Type 45s sailing in out of Portsmouth, I can say: we laid the foundations."

They're getting there. On our last visit to Daring we observed that for all the wizardry and Top Trumps facts, there was a rather sterile living environment.

Well, six months down the line, slightly less sterile, courtesy of some WW2 posters. The chintzy William Morris seat patterns have gone too (*Boo* – laying those foundations is,



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Daring's CO Capt Paddy McAlpine, "hard work, challenging".

He continues: "Yes, we're going through the pain barrier. But this should be what people join the Navy to do."

"My worst day is probably better than most people's best days. There are 33,000 people in the Navy who probably envy what we're doing."

But at this very moment, possibly not. On the bridge gunnery officer Lt Dave Thompson is watching a small craft, the Oddjob, which is bearing straight for Daring - and being pigheaded about it. She's ignoring all the instructions the Yorkshireman is giving her to turn away.

Two young officers are peering out of the side windows with binoculars, trying to track two low-flying Hawks.

In the approaches to Plymouth there's choreographed chaos as RFAs Largs Bay and Wave Knight turn sharply to avoid the jets and HMS Gloucester manoeuvres frantically between them.

Down in the operations 'complex', CPO Button is pacing about the consoles - he reckons he's walked three miles today trying to help direct the battle.

"The ops room is getting a bit frantic," says the chief.

"Lower your voices. Keep calm and carry on."

... THE TYPE 45 ZONE... THE TYPE 45 ZONE... TH

CLASSIC
JACK

BY TUGS

THAT'S HMS OCEAN - IT'S FULL OF BOOTNECKS - AS YOUR FATHER FOUND OUT - HE FINISHED UP BEING STEWED IN A MESS TIN WITH TWO HEDGEHOGS



Who benefits from Navy Days?

AS Navy Days is approaching I would like to know who is doing the organising?

Navy Days used to be organised by the serving naval personnel, assisted by ex-naval personnel. All profits after expenses were distributed among naval charities.

Today's events are run by civvies who do not know what they are doing and charge huge amounts to enter the dockyards or air stations.

A lot of naval charities are run by volunteers who do not get paid and who do it to help other ex-naval personnel.

The big question is this - why are naval charities charged over £1,000 to put a stand in the dockyard when they are trying to raise funds to carry out their work?

Why rob the naval charities by charging them these huge amounts to have a display when the organisers are lining their pockets?

- Allan Mercer, HMS Glasgow Association, Widnes, Cheshire

A spokesman for the Navy Days Planning team told us:

"Navy Days is not a core defence activity and cannot be funded by the MoD (ultimately the taxpayer).

"For the Naval Base to be allowed to stage Navy Days it has to guarantee that it can recoup the large costs associated with the event.

"To cover the costs means unfortunately having to charge the general public for admittance and to charge to have stands including charities.

"The Navy Days planning team understands that members of the public and particularly charities find this disappointing.

"However these are the rules that have been laid down by HM Treasury and we must comply with them."

This year's Navy Days are on July 29, 30 and August 1 at Portsmouth Naval Base.

Navy News will have a stand, so we hope to meet lots of visitors - Ed.

LETTERS to the editor should always be accompanied by the correspondent's name and address, not necessarily for publication.

E-mail correspondents are also requested to provide this information. Letters cannot be submitted over the telephone.

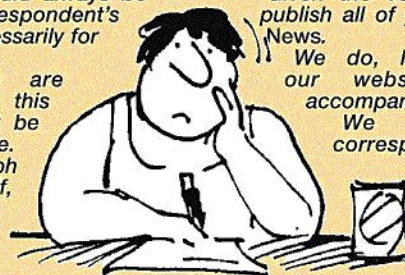
If you submit a photograph which you did not take yourself, please make sure that you have the permission for us to publish it.

Given the volume of letters, we cannot publish all of your correspondence in Navy News.

We do, however, publish many on our website, www.navynews.co.uk, accompanied by images.

We look particularly for correspondence which stimulates debate, makes us laugh or raises important issues.

The editor reserves the right to edit your submissions.



Convoy medals came too late

IT HAS been my great pleasure to receive, through the Russian Embassy, a medal commemorating my service on Arctic convoys in World War 2.

This medal, celebrating the 65th anniversary of victory in 1945, joins those already in my proud possession commemorating the 40th, 50th and 60th anniversaries of our struggle through these northern waters.

I find it very gratifying that Russia has continued to recognise, over these many years, the individual contributions we made towards mutual victory - even though virtually no-one now in office would have been alive at the time.

My regret is that as a then 18-year-old seaman on board the destroyer HMS Middleton and now over 85, so few of us are around to receive these generous and thoughtful gestures from our wartime ally.

- Mike Alston, Association Secretary, HMS Middleton (L74) Association, Maidenhead, Berks

...AFTER reading an article in my local paper about the Russians giving out medals for those who served on Arctic convoys I got very angry, not at those who received the medals, but at the Russian government for not recognising my father, John, because he is dead.

I have tried for years to get them to send me a Russian Convoy

Medal but to no avail.

My father served on a destroyer, HMS Faulknor, which spent most of 1942 on Arctic convoys in some of the worst weather ever known. It was so rough, it smashed guns and railings. To go on deck, unless roped to the ship, meant certain death.

The sailors had to live in their sea boots because the mess was always flooded, and with the pumps and toilets out of order they were wading through all sorts of filth. The galley was nearly always out of order so they had to eat cold meals.

Despite all they went through, they still sank a U-boat, and helped sink another one.

My dad was 32 in 1942, one of the oldest ratings on board. By all accounts he did his best to look after the 18-year-olds.

He helped serve the rum ration - because of him and his mate there were always one or two bottles for birthdays and to cheer them up when they were really up against it.

It's just not fair that all those sailors, British and American, who served as gunners on merchantmen, and all the poor merchant seamen who have since died, in some cases because of what they went through on the Arctic convoys, were not recognised before they could claim the medal and the recognition they deserve.

- Brian Parkinson, Brownhills, West Midlands



● Mary Walker with the hooky mat she presented to HMS Newcastle in 1978

Mum's mat

DURING the 1970s, when HMS Newcastle was in build at Swan Hunters, I worked for the local BBC North-East television studios.

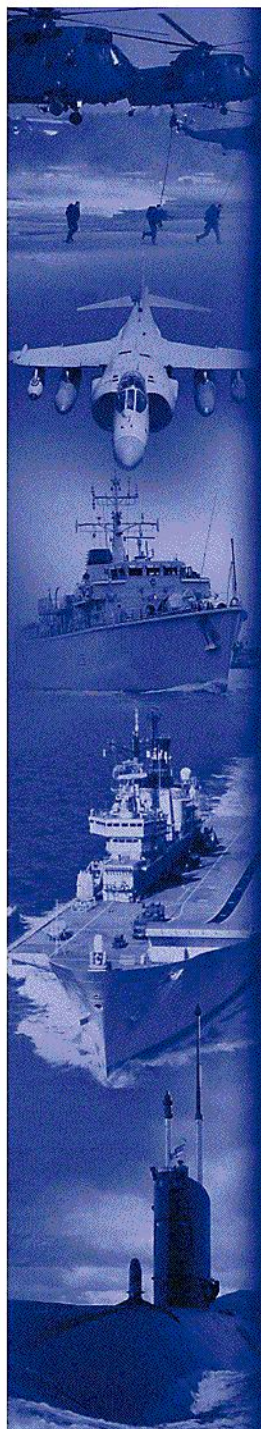
I directed a documentary film about the ship, from keel-laying to commissioning.


Shortly before Newcastle left the Tyne my mother, who was a keen exponent of the local craft of rug-making, produced a splendid hooky mat with the ship's crest set in it which she presented to the ship.

When she was entertained on board and saw her mat hanging in a place of honour on the wardroom bulkhead she was somewhat puzzled and whispered to me: "Did you not tell these lads a mat's supposed to go on the floor?"

I have often wondered what became of the hooky mat. Could any of your readers shed any light?

- Dave Walker, South Shields, Tyne and Wear





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Fleet Ops – nerve centre of the Navy

WHO runs the Navy?

That's a big question, and it all depends in what you mean by 'runs'.

The Government has a pretty big say, as does the top brass – the title 'Commander-in-Chief Fleet' is a bit of a giveaway.

But who actually runs the Navy – who are the people (figuratively) pushing little models of Type 23s and commando units around a map of the world?

To meet these people you have to travel some way inland, to Fleet Operations at Northwood in Middlesex – the nerve centre of the Royal Navy.

Part controller, part emergency call centre, part agony aunt, part diplomatic fixer, Fleet Ops sends out men (and women) and machines to achieve a result, and they keep our shores safe.

And if anything untoward happens anywhere in the world affecting a vessel, aircraft or vehicle from the Senior Service, or to a sailor or Royal, these people are the first to know and the first to react.

It's a big job for a diverse team, led by Commander (Operations) Rear Admiral Mark Anderson.

And it's a job which requires a breadth and depth of knowledge in a specialist field which can only come from experience.

Fleet Ops is the sharp end of a mechanism which turns raw materials (ships, people, aircraft) into deployments and taskings.

The process can start way back, sometimes decades ago, with the identification of a need.

That might come from the



Picture: Carrillion

highest levels of Government – such as the old Armilla patrol and its modern Telic equivalents, keeping Gulf sea lanes safe.

Or it may be another Government department acting as a 'customer', such as defence diplomacy events for the Foreign Office or fishery protection patrols for DEFRA.

There may even be an urgent and specific request for a short-term Naval presence in a particular area at a particular time, perhaps arising from intelligence garnered by the Serious Organised Crime Agency (SOCA) or HM Revenue and Customs.

These Maritime Regional Engagement Plans (the strategic,

ongoing tasks) and Effects Requirement Documents (specific one-off requests) are put to the Fleet Ops Policy team, which will determine exactly what the customer is trying to achieve, and work out the best way to achieve it.

Once the details are finalised, the proposal is passed on to Fleet Commitments in Whale Island, which feeds it into the main plot, along with manpower factors and long-term ship programmes, taking maintenance and training into account.

The result is a Long Term Operational Schedule (LTOS) – a naval Five-Year Plan.

Using the LTOS as a guide, planners can then create the tools to turn the plan into reality, a process known as force generation.

All the elements of a deployment – submarines, ships, sailors, aircraft, Royal Marines – are earmarked, equipped, and handed over to Flag Officer Sea Training to make sure they are fit and ready for the job in hand.

Once FOST has ticked the box, the force – be it a single minehunter or a carrier task group – is ready to go, and that is where Fleet Ops takes over.

They run the detailed short-term programme, out to around six months – longer in some cases, such as submarines and surveying.

They keep an eye on each and every unit, making sure it is achieving the agreed aim.

And they spring into action if things go awry.

The only exceptions are those units under the command of Permanent Joint Headquarters (PJHQ), such as the Middle East and the Falklands, though full command, together with functions such as engineering and logistics support, remain with Fleet Ops.

And the bombers – Britain's Trident nuclear deterrent submarines – are dealt with by a discrete unit 'down the hole', i.e. in the Northwood bunker, but still part of the Fleet Ops team.

The key to Fleet Ops' success is the flow of information, both official and informal, and the ability to tackle crises both large and small.

Fleet Ops is a classic example of the whole being very much more effective than the sum of its parts.

DACOS (Ops), currently Capt Paul Abraham and always a submariner, is the man linking the team to the upper echelons of Fleet.

In terms of the daily spadework, the Ops team is headed by Fleet Operations Officer (FOO) Cdr Tim Peacock, an aviator who drove HMS Monmouth on her round-the-world deployment a couple of years ago, and the Submarine Operations Officer (SOO) Cdr Mark Honnoraty, who drove HMS Shoreham, HMS Vigilant and HMS Vengeance.

Around FOO and SOO are a cluster of desks, each dealing with a particular element or facet of the Naval Service, from engineering to Royal Marines.

The proximity means that a problem with the Merlin flight on a frigate can be bandied about so that all aspects of the problem can be explored from the outset, from changes to an operational programme to logistical support through the provision of spare parts.

Just as importantly, the Marine Engineer Officer or logistics linchpin in a far-distant ship is not merely a disembodied voice at the



● *Astute prepares to vent her tanks (thank you submariners far and wide who reacted to last month's story – a boat vents its tanks to submerge, blows its tanks to surface. We will pass that piece of information on to the skimmer officer concerned...). The new submarine was conducting trials off Scotland – and the safe water she required to dive into and manoeuvre was overseen by Fleet Ops*

end of a telephone line, because every unit that deploys sends its command team and Heads of Department to a pre-deployment brief at Oswald Building.

By chewing the fat with their own 'minder' at Fleet Ops, key personnel on a deploying ship or task group can talk about any potential Pooh-traps or problems which other ships have highlighted.

FOO and SOO are the point of contact for the Commanding Officer, and the various HoDs will disperse around the office to talk to their Fleet Ops counterparts.

Once the ship is on task, any causes for concern will be raised first with Cdr Peacock or one of his colleagues, who between them man the desks day and night, 365 days a year.

Two of those desks are occupied by the Fleet Operations Maintenance Officers, one dedicated to submarines.

FOMO (SM) Cdr Richard Hutchins said: "On a day-to-day basis we get the operational defect (Opdef) reports from submarines, and it veers and hauls on a daily basis – sometimes it is relatively calm, other days it's a bit frantic."

Crucial to any action taken on an Opdef is its consequences, which can ripple far and wide – what are the implications for Fleet and other interested parties, and how can the problem be fixed?

"We work very closely with other departments, which is why this open floor plan is very useful," said Cdr Hutchins.

"I sit next to SOO, and we have a continuous dialogue about the effects on an operation of a defect."

"We pick things up as we go along – you can pick up the buzz, and tell when things are changing."

"That way we tend to hear things much sooner and get in at ground level."

"We need to look at major opdefs

which might affect the programme or keep a submarine alongside, preventing it from delivering what was promised, whereas the lower-level, niggly stuff we just keep a weather eye on."

SOO has a dedicated team that also provides safe water for submarines to dive in, as was the case with Astute's recent deep-dive trials off Scotland.

Cdr Mark Irwin, the surface ship FOMO, explained how a typical scenario might play out.

"For example, a Type 23 might have defects with her diesel generators," said Cdr Irwin.

"The ship calls us to explain what the problems are, what they are doing about it, what they need and what the effect on current and future tasking may be."

"We then contact the team at DE&S that supports diesels and discuss repair options, availability of spares and start to formulate a plan for rectification of the defects."

"The loggists' desk here at Fleet Ops can tell us the best way to get spares to the ship quickly with the minimum of risk."

"We may then need to talk with the surface ship scheduler – who is just a few desks away – to change the ship's programme to optimise the repair plan and the maintenance of the ship's capability."

"As well as dealing with the high level – such as recommending changes to ship's programmes – my team also get involved in the real detail, from identifying sources for needed stores using Google to arranging for people joining ships to take much-needed stores with them. Only smallish items, obviously!"

"We almost go from the sublime to the ridiculous, but the bottom line is we are available 24/7 and always push to keep ships as operationally capable as possible."

Once again the key to a

successful conclusion is that the Fleet Ops team faces both ways – troubleshooting and solving the problem in theatre while also feeding timely and accurate information back up the chain of command to those who need to know.

The same ethos is espoused by the Operational Logistics team, according to First Officer Ed Read RFA.

"We act as a broker or liaison, sitting in between the front line and logistics," said 1/O Read.

"While we do not actually move anything we facilitate it, which is why we have 24-hours-a-day logistics cover."

"We can start pushing and prioritising, making sure it gets done – and maybe come up with novel answers if needed to speed up the process."

"If everything works perfectly we do not have a role, but if it doesn't we troubleshoot and get it operating."

"We are three pussers on the end of a phone to talk through any issues or offer advice."

"We bounce ideas around and, if something is not quite right, we go in with the appropriate level of authority."

Each desk in the operations centre fulfils similar roles for the aviation, small ships, mine warfare and others.

And from time to time – perhaps in the shadow of a cloud of volcanic ash, or with cold water gushing into the bowels of a Navy ship – these specialists put their heads together to sort out or avoid a crisis as part of the Fleet Incident Response Cell (FIRC), a brains trust with considerable knowledge (and an unrivalled list of contacts) which is expected to handle a hot potato while still keeping the rest of the Fleet programme running smoothly.

See next month's *Navy News* for more from Fleet Operations and the FIRC.



● *You are never alone, even in an empty sea... any concerns can be passed straight on to Fleet Ops, who will take it on and sort out an answer*

Picture: LA(Phot) Caroline Davies



● *Major surface ships programmer Lt Cdr Charlie Guy gets to grips with one of the day's issues at Fleet Ops in Northwood*

Picture: Carrillion



Torrents can't halt Torrevieja

MEMBERS of Torrevieja branch in Spain took part in the local Veterans Day parade, which was well-attended despite the torrential storm which struck just before the event was scheduled to start.

Shipmates joined serving and ex-serving Spanish, British and foreign personnel in the event, part of the town's St Christopher festival, which celebrates the patron saint of travellers.

S/M Dick Conway and his team had been working hard at the waterfront site since early in the morning, and although the downpour curtailed some of the planned entertainment, military displays did go ahead as planned in the early evening.

Spanish patrol ships were open to visitors during the day, and the guest of honour was Lt Gen José Emilio Roldán Pascual, head of the Spanish military emergency response unit *Unidad Militar de Emergencias*, an Army group trained to deal with fire, flood, earthquake and whatever else Mother Nature throws at them.

The final veterans parade and homage to the fallen, although rearranged because of the weather, still won the admiration of a considerable gathering of locals.

Pilgrimage fund boost

THE Joint Services Hosanna House Group members were entertained by WO Deno Lawson and his messmates at the HMS Drake senior rates mess – an event which included a meat raffle – before the departure of the International Military Pilgrimage (IMP) to Lourdes, in France.

The members thanked WO Lawson and his colleagues, and also appreciated a donation of £200 from Plymouth branch to support the work of the JSHHG, which takes children and adults with disabilities and special needs on pilgrimage holidays to Lourdes every year.

For more details see www.hcpt.org.uk

Crosby celebrates silver jubilee

CROSBY branch has celebrated the 25th anniversary of its re-founding.

The venue for the party was the branch's base at the Crosby Old Comrades Club.

Youngsters from TS Starling provided a Sea Cadet band and a guard of honour for the occasion.

The band played some excellent music and provided a proud guard throughout the day, according to the Crosby shipmates.

The Mayor and Mayoress of Sefton attended the event, and were met at the reception by the club's chairman, S/M Bill Roberts.

St Helens, Chester and the George Cross Association also attended, as well as Cdr Harley, the Area 10 president.

There were some important presentations made on the day, including sets of memorial cufflinks presented to S/Ms Bill Roberts, Claude Harding, Brian Simpson and Dave Palmer.

All four members have been with Crosby branch since its beginning, and were presented with their gifts by the Mayor and Cdr Harley.

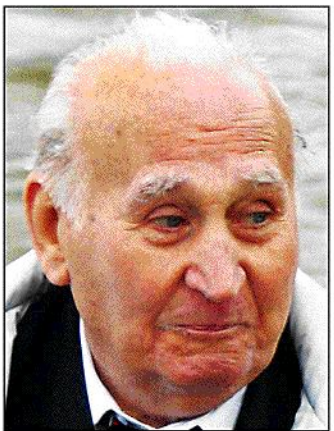
The biggest presentation was made to club president S/M Tom Beswarick in celebration of his forthcoming 90th birthday.

Tom – a former mayor, JP and member of the George Cross Association – had recently written his biography and a photograph from his book was used to commission an oil painting of the ship he served on during World War 2 at Malta.

The painting was completed by a talented prisoner at HMP Altcourse in Liverpool.

Cdr Harley and the Mayor made the presentation to Tom, who provided an emotional explanation as to the meaning of the painting.

The celebrations continued with 'up spirits' and entertainment provided by a local singer.



● James 'Lofty' Christmas

Lofty: In the thick of the fighting

FORMER Thurrock branch shipmates of James 'Lofty' Christmas have been in touch to expand on his war record.

Lofty, who died on May 2, shortly before the Little Ships returned to Dunkirk, joined the Royal Navy a couple of years before World War 2, and was a young seaman/gunner in a destroyer which saw action in the Spanish Civil War whilst picking up British Embassy staff off the coast.

With war declared, Lofty served in one of the H-class destroyers which were involved in the First Battle of Narvik in April 1940.

While taking a few days rest in Chatham, he and a rating named Alfie were told to head by bus to Ramsgate as they were urgently needed to crew the boats heading for Dunkirk.

Lofty and another sailor crewed the Sea Scouts pinnace Minotaur, skippered by the Group Scout Master from Mortlake and a Scout Leader engineer.

After a couple of days, short of fuel and with her engine making strange noises, Minotaur was stood down.

The two ratings managed to get a few hours sleep before being sent back to Dunkirk to man motorised open lifeboats.

While heading back to the beach after transferring evacuees to a destroyer, the blast from a Stuka bomb capsized Lofty's lifeboat; Alfie was never seen again.

Only hours before Alfie had found a cork strip lifebelt and handed it to Lofty to avoid injury to his waist and stomach from pulling soldiers over the sides of the lifeboat. The belt saved Lofty.

He went on to serve in Malta and Arctic convoys, and while in a Russian port late one dark, cold winter evening, while taking a stroll around the destroyer's deck, he heard a splash in the water.

Looking down he saw a Russian guard who had slipped on the ice of the dock walkway and fallen in.

Lofty jumped in and held the man's head above the water until other guards dragged them out.

S/M John Rush, who provided this brief biography, said: "The Russians never forgot the brave British sailor and, over the years, Lofty was asked to attend the Russian Embassy on more than one occasion and was presented with three Russian medals over the years."

Visitors help Orkney dedicate standard

ORKNEY branch has staged a weekend of celebrations to mark the dedication of their standard.

Friday began with a tour over to the island of Hoy, where Lyness – the former Royal Navy wartime HQ for Scapa Flow – is the home of the Naval Museum, the Arctic Convoy Memorial and Lyness Naval Cemetery.

The weather was kind and the group on the tour seemed to have a thoroughly good time.

Later that evening, a welcome party was held in the Kirkwall branch of the Royal British Legion.

In proper naval tradition, the bar remained busy and shipmates kept the sea stories flowing.

Saturday was Orkney branch's buffet and dance, which started with a few words from the chairman, followed by replies from the 15 visiting branches.

After a presentation to all the branches of an Orkney RNA crest – including one to National President S/M John McAnally, the buffet was served and the dancing began.

There may be some who are considered elderly, but not when it comes to the dance floor – the band worked hard until time was called.

Sunday saw most people getting an early lunch before forming up outside Kirkwall RBL for the parade, starting at 1300hrs.

The marchers headed to the Kirkwall Cenotaph to lay a wreath, then moved on for a church service in St Magnus Cathedral, led by branch chaplain the Rev David Dawson.

After a very moving service, the parade formed once again and marched back to Kirkwall RBL for refreshments and farewells to those returning south.



● The national and local branch standard at the Orkney ceremony

£50 PRIZE PUZZLE



THE mystery ship in our May edition (right) was HMS Fox and the mascot was Basil Brush – so J Bigg of Gosport wins our £50 prize.

This month's ship (above), had something of a split personality.

She was launched at Camper & Nicholson in October 1957 as a Ton-class minesweeper under one name, but in 1959 took up a new training role with the RNR in Liverpool under a second name.

In January 1976 she reverted to her original name and role – but within months she entered refit and emerged in 1978 to take up a new role in fishery protection.

What were the ship's two names?

Complete the coupon and send it to Mystery Picture, Navy News,



HMS Nelson, Portsmouth PO1 3HH. Coupons giving the correct answer will go into a prize draw to establish a winner.

Closing date for entries is August 13. More than one entry can be submitted, but photocopies cannot be accepted. Do not include anything else in your envelope: no correspondence can be entered into and no entry returned.

The winner will be announced in our September edition. The competition is not open to Navy News employees or their families.

MYSTERY PICTURE 185

Name

Address

My answers

Tallinn honours E18

A SERVICE of remembrance has been held in the Estonian capital of Tallinn to honour the Royal Navy sailors of submarine E18.

The boat was one of a handful sent to the Baltic to disrupt German iron ore supply lines during World War 1, successfully operating out of the Russian port of Revel, as Tallinn was known at that time.

But in June 1916 she disappeared, taking 30 British sailors and three Russian liaison officers with her, and her fate remained a mystery until the involvement of Darren Brown, the Australian great-grandson of a crewman who was taken ill shortly before her final patrol and was haunted by his narrow escape for the rest of his life.

Darren spent a decade researching archives until he was convinced he knew roughly where she lay – and a sonar

survey quickly found the wreck of E18, the evidence suggesting she had struck a mine.

Efforts then began to contact relatives of the crew, co-ordinated by Robert Davenport, whose grandmother's first husband was E18's slightly eccentric CO Lt Cdr Robert Halahan.

The Russian Submariners Club is also involved, though it has yet to trace any Russian descendants. Relatives of half-a-dozen British crew members, plus a couple who were not on board when she sank, have since come forward.

And more than a dozen people travelled to Tallinn for the service and dedication of a memorial at the Pühavaimu Kirik, or Church of the Holy Spirit.

The party also toured historic Naval sites.

The wreck is in the process of being officially recognised as

a maritime military grave, but Mr Davenport has said he hopes the authorities will watch the site until that happens as her location and historical significance would make her attractive to unscrupulous divers.

Dauntless link

FORMER Wrens were among the first guests on the list for the commissioning of HMS Dauntless (see p23).

Because the name Dauntless has a special significance for many Wrens, having been trained at the stone frigate HMS Dauntless, near Reading, between 1953 and 1981.

See next month's *Navy News* for a closer look at the links between the two Dauntlesses, and at the Association of Wrens, which celebrates its 90th anniversary this year.

Naval Quirks

DO YOU KNOW WHO THE TOP AUSTRIAN U-BOAT ACE OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR WAS?



CURIOUS... SEEMS TO HAVE SLIPPED MY MIND...

I'LL GIVE YOU A CLUE – "THE SOUND OF MUSIC"!



LET'S SEE... JULIE ANDREWS? THE MOTHER SUPERIOR? THE BARONESS?

NO, NO! CAPTAIN RITTER VON TRAPP OF COURSE!



AH...

I think we've located von Trapp sir – our hydrophone has picked up the faint strains of "Edelweiss" at 20 fathoms...



MICAH



ROYAL NAVAL ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE - OUISTREHAM 2010

‘Listen and learn from sailors of today’

WITH membership remaining a problematic issue, National Chairman S/M David White spoke to delegates and observers on the subject of the MOU.

“Areas and branches need to work hard on our part of the Memorandum of Understanding with the Royal Navy with a view to signalling to the serving Navy they need to do likewise in order to match our endeavours,” he said.

“As we try to improve our profile, we must also show interest in, and learn more about, our Navy.

“It is important to remember while there are shipmates with good recollections of conflicts past, that over the past 20 years, most of those serving in the Navy today also have experiences of their own.

“So while we talk of those challenging times in the past, in the hope of enlightening them, let us be prepared to listen, and learn, from those serving today.”

S/M Jeremy Owens, chairman of the Standing Orders Committee, confirmed that there were 69 delegates at the start of business – that reduced to 66 after the lunch break – and 80 observers.

Honorary Treasurer S/M Ray Barraclough told delegates that the main source of income remained subscriptions, which had – as expected – fallen from £201,000 in 2008 to £192,000 in 2009, in part down to the demise of 15 branches.

He added that “there was a disappointing decrease in £2,800 over the 2008 figure in the level of tax reclaimed through the Gift Aid scheme,” and reminded delegates that the National Council still strongly recommends the scheme to all members who pay any tax.

There was some good news, however, in the announcement of a net surplus of over £83,000 – although the operational deficit of the Association (expenditure over income) was £117,000, net movement in other reserves, including legacies, was nearly £106,000 and the unrealised gain on investments was £94,400 as a result of a “rewarding year” for the RNA’s investments.

There was also a vote of thanks to Brooms Professional Services Ltd for their help with data input and hands-on training for new recruits – much of the extra work provided at no extra cost to the Association.



● Outgoing General Secretary S/M Paddy McClurg (right) hands over to S/M Paul Quinn on the beach at Ouistreham on June 6 following the National Conference in Normandy. In the background is the graduation ceremony for French commandos from the L'Orient school, who remember their comrades amongst the first ashore 66 years ago. RNA National President S/M John McAnally inspected the French troops and made presentations

Conference picture: S/M Nigel Huxtable

Stalwarts draw a line in the sand

OUISTREHAM 2010 saw a number of significant farewells as some of the big hitters left the field of play.

Archdeacon the Ven John Green, Chaplain of the Fleet, said although it was his last Conference, the RNA would still have a part to play in his life.

S/M David White stood down as National Chairman at end of Conference after nearly 20 years as member for 4 Area, Vice Chairman and National Chairman, during which time he enjoyed strong support from his wife Monica.

National President S/M John McAnally said: “I owe David a great debt personally for all the support, advice and comradeship he has given me.

“He has made a huge contribution to our association, recognised by the award of the MBE last year, and his calm nature

and wise counsel will be missed.”

A new National Chairman will be elected in September.

And it was also time for General Secretary S/M Paddy McClurg to call it a day – and, as S/M David White said: “Now, what shall we do about Paddy?”

“Paddy retires as General Secretary on Sunday afternoon with the objective, as he puts it, to drink himself into insensibility – which I am sure he doesn’t really mean.

“This will be after a wonderful contribution to our association, and really playing a major part in helping it get back on its feet.”

Later in proceedings, National Vice Chairman S/M Chris Dovey remarked to S/M White that “it is certainly time to let the old bugger go.”

S/M Dovey also noted that the outgoing General Secretary had “set the trend for the future,

because this new guy Paul Quinn is exactly the same size and shape...”

Conference saw S/M Paddy on his way with a framed letter from Buckingham Palace announcing that the Queen was pleased to be kept informed of matters at RNA HQ, and that she sent warm good wishes.

S/M David White described how S/M Paddy had done an “immense amount of work” for the RNA since being initially taken on as an executive assistant on a fixed-term consultancy contract to carry out a study of the association’s management processes and procedures.

He was then invited by the National Council to implement his recommendations – a standard business practice, it was pointed out – and he made the most decisive contribution to a vibrant future for the Association.

It was also noted by S/M Dovey

that he had contributed fully to the RNA’s charitable work, and also participated in branch events all over the UK, “usually entirely at his own expense.”

S/Ms White and Dovey, warming to their stand-up routine, also expressed their appreciation for the support given by S/M Paddy’s wife Kate.

In his reply, S/M Paddy said it had been an interesting third career, but he now felt he had taken the Association as far as he could, and “what it needs now is a young chap, vibrant, keen, ignorant of the facts ... and we’ve found one – an old respected colleague, and you couldn’t get a better one.”

He finished by echoing the last words written by Capt Robert Falcon Scott in his diary as he faced death in the Antarctic: “For God’s sake, look after our people, because that’s what we are about, that’s what we are here for.”



● National standard bearer S/M Bob Coburn and FAMMAC standard bearer Jacques Jouve on duty at the National Conference in Ouistreham

4 is the number for top recruiting

NUMBER 4 area once again proved the most adept at recruiting full members, retaining the Sword of Honour for 2009 which it won at Londonderry last year.

And Plymouth branch made it a double for No 4 Area by taking the Brigg’s Dirk award for recruitment by large branches.

The Brigg’s Rose Bowl award for small branches went to Nottingham.

The Overseas certificate for large branches was won for the second year running by Riyadh in Saudi Arabia, while Natal in South Africa took the honours for overseas small branches.

And No 4 Area also retained the Tasker Bowl, presented to the area which achieves most Gift Aid returns.

Two other special awards were made before delegates got down to business.

One was made to Jacques Jouve of the *Fédération des Associations de Marins et de Marins Anciens Combattants* (FAMMAC) – the nearest French equivalent to the RNA – who played a major role in helping to organise the conference on his home patch, and who carried a FAMMAC standard at ceremonies during Conference and the weekend’s ceremonies.

The other was a Golden Jubilee certificate, presented to National Council member and National Welfare Adviser S/M Rita Lock, marking 50 years of continuous membership of the RNA.

Too generous!

A COLLECTION was held during the Conference dinner for the RN Benevolent Trust – and proved so lucrative that an extra receptacle had to be sought.

The original collecting tin proved too modest, and a sizeable bag was also filled, to the delight of RNBT representatives.



● Veterans – including members of the RNA – and the general public pay their respects at the Landing Craft Memorial at Ouistreham ferry port. The event was one of several attended by officials, delegates and observers over the Conference period. The main, official events included a battlefield tour on Saturday June 5, followed by an Act of Remembrance in Caen, and a ceremony at the 4 Commando Memorial before all gathered at the ferry port. Other members attended smaller-scale events, such as that at Hermanville-sur-Mer (see opposite). For non-delegates who did not wish to sit through the Conference there was a visit to Bayeux, courtesy of FAMMAC

‘Inform the nation about our Navy’

IN his keynote speech, First Sea Lord Admiral Sir Mark Stanhope underlined the importance he places on the Association in terms of spreading the RN message.

“Your understanding of where your Navy is going is important to me, and to the Navy Board, because I seek, and we seek, your support in getting across to others the fundamental importance of maintaining globally-deployed, operationally capable maritime forces,” he told delegates and observers.

The admiral said that there were currently 900 sailors and Royal Marines fighting in Afghanistan – ten per cent of the UK’s armed forces contributing to that land campaign.

And this time next year, with 3 Cdo Brigade as lead brigade, 3,500 members of the Naval Service – or ten per cent of “our people” and one-third of the total UK contribution – will be in Afghanistan.

In addition, 1,500 Naval personnel were helping protect trade and security and promote stability in the Middle East, and there are considerable Naval presences in the Caribbean, South Atlantic, and around our own home shores, not forgetting the submarine-based UK nuclear deterrent.

As an example of the work done, the First Sea Lord told delegates that last year HMS Iron

Duke seized more illegal drugs than the UK combined police, customs and enforcement agencies.

There was also a task group to the West Atlantic – task groups being “inherently flexible and very powerful, giving to the Government considerable choice in choosing how to respond to any developing crisis.”

He observed that “warfighting is our benchmark; utility and agility are what I call our hallmarks.”

And he urged shipmates to guard against “the tyranny of pessimism” about the future of the Navy; “maritime power and economic growth go hand-in-hand,” he said.

The Navy has new Type 45 destroyers and Astute-class submarines, and the new carriers are on track, he said – £1.5bn has already been spent on them, and 10,000 people in the UK are employed in building them.

“The people in your Navy have the same qualities, the same commitment, the same professionalism, the same grit and the same determination that all of you had when you joined the Navy – yes, society is slightly different; yes, we have to deliver in a slightly different way, but, ladies and gentlemen, they are quality, absolutely quality, and they will deliver the grit and determination to do what

this country needs of them should they be called upon to do so.

“I am hugely proud of being the First Sea Lord, but by golly am I proud of the people I command.”

Of the Navy in the future, against a backdrop of economic woes, the Admiral said “warships and nuclear submarines don’t come cheap, but they offer unmatched versatility, agility and capability, and, of course, once commissioned, they are relatively cheap to run and serve our nation for decades.”

He also said there would be more effort in conflict prevention in the future – again, putting a premium on maritime forces out there in the world, “doing what navies do,” reassuring friends and deterring potential aggressors.

In conclusion, the Admiral said: “Your Association, and you, the shipmates in it, have an important part to play in informing the national debate about armed forces and, of course, the maritime contribution therein.

“True, the Senior Service never shouts, it whispers, but when hundreds of whispers come together in pubs and clubs and societies and meetings around the world, especially in the United Kingdom, and when you come together and pass on the message to your colleagues, then they can have a profound effect.”



The French connection proves popular

OUISTREHAM was a controversial choice for the 2010 National Conference, writes Navy News editor Mike Gray.

Back in Dundee in 2008 the motion proposing a location for this year brought heated debate – a very unusual situation.

A bid to switch to the Home Counties was heavily defeated as S/M David Glossop (France Nord) promised to deliver “a conference that is going to be the mother of all conferences.”

The key was to link the annual AGM and associated business with the D-Day commemorative events which lay within easy reach of the small port town which serves the nearby city of Caen.

And the general consensus was that the French contingent had indeed staged a conference they had every right to be proud of.

Of course things go wrong – bookings can go awry, timings change, even menus change (causing some head-scratching at the Conference dinner – it wasn't what we expected but it was still an excellent meal).

But the general consensus of those who made the Channel crossing was that it had been worth it.

The facilities at the town's sports stadium, Stade Kieffer, fitted the bill, with both the conference and the dinners taking place in the cavernous sports hall.

The Mayor was delighted that his town had the honour of hosting the first RNA conference to be held outside the British Isles, but then the veteran official – 27 years in the post – has a proud record with regards to the British Armed Forces.

M André Ledran has an MBE in recognition of his role in welcoming veterans to Normandy, and has personal memories of the tremendous cannonade which accompanied the assault forces back in 1944, when he was a young boy in a small town south of Cherbourg.

Addressing the Conference at its opening, M Ledran said: “Excuse me – I speak French.

“I speak French very well, but *je ne parle pas très bien Anglais*.”

For his efforts, the Mayor was rewarded with the traditional RNA gift – a decanter of rum or, as National President S/M John McAnally put it, “Nelson's Blood”.

Of course, it was not just the British contingent who travelled far.

Even some of those in the host branch, and in Aquitaine, had considerable journeys to Normandy.

Two members of the Belgium branch had originally planned to sail, but were thwarted by bad weather and had to hastily rearrange their schedule using a camper van. And one observer, the widow of a former shipmate, made the long trip from Canada.

The ripples from the decision to travel to Normandy were still visible during proceedings, when the subject of choosing venues for future gatherings was explored during branch motions (see right).

So it may be some time before Conference once again closes with two standards marched off, and members stand for the National Anthem and *La Marseillaise*.

Future members and conferences to come

WITH 14 branch motions and two suggested alterations to the RNA's rule book to consider, there was a sense of urgency during the main debates which had perhaps been missing in recent years.

The two proposed amendments to the Supplemental Charter, both tabled by Watford and seconded by St Neot's, were heavily defeated (59-4 and 58-4 respectively) as delegates argued that the status quo allowed for a more accurate reflection of the views of the Association.

In both cases the aim was to reduce the number of votes needed to change rules and provisions in the Charter to a simple majority, but both were opposed by National Council, with National Chairman S/M David White suggesting delegates wait until a current comprehensive review of the rules has been completed.

In the light of these decisions, Branch Motion 1, which was linked to the charter motions and would have brought a simple majority rather than at least two-thirds majority to votes at Conference, council, area and branch meetings, was withdrawn by Watford branch.

Chatham's twin-track bid to clarify the role of National Council members and their deputies, and to establish a common election process for both of these posts,

was successful.

Motions 2 and 3, introduced by S/M Darby Allen and seconded by S/M Mick Cox of Margate, were both passed – although Motion 3, as amended by National Council, was passed by the narrowest margin.

S/M Withington (Isle of Sheppey) introduced Motion 4 to “improve the image of the Standing Orders Committee” by tidying up the wording of Association Rule 14(c), making sure candidates seeking re-election should be nominated in the same way as any others, and that they should be endorsed by their own branch.

Seconded by S/M Mick Cox (Margate) and backed by the National Council, the motion was carried.

Conference itself was the subject of Motion 5, proposed by S/M Joe Morton of Helston.

Backed by S/M Trevor Crowter (Sherborne), S/M Morton outlined the problems of cost and travel which prevented some members attending Conference, and suggested a study group be set up to look into the options for future affordable and accessible locations, perhaps alternating between the north and south.

He added that the organisation of such events should no longer be a burden which falls on the shoulders of a single branch.

The motion, amended so that such a group would report back to Conference through National

Council, was carried.

With the study group primed to look at all aspects of the staging of Conference, Motion 6 – a bid to hold a postal ballot of all branches as to the location of future events – was withdrawn by Watford, as was Motion 7, a suggestion by Helston that future Conferences be held in September, not June, as both options would fall within the remit of the new group.

An exhortation by Plymouth branch, seconded by Frome, that the National Council positively pursue enhancement to the Memorandum of Understanding with the RN, to allow ships' and establishments' RNA Liaison Officers (namely Executive Warrant Officers or designated deputies) attendance and voting rights at National Conference, was comfortably carried.

Delegates dismissed a proposed National Council amendment which would have encouraged, rather than allowed, attendance and removed any reference to voting rights.

Motion 8, said S/M Arthur Gutteridge, was intended to encourage the RN to become involved in the Association, adding that conversations on board ships and in establishments indicated that serving sailors were by no means aware of the memorandum.

He said statistics indicated that in ten years the ex-serving and associate membership could be down to 11,564, and that serving personnel represented the future of the Association – although they only have one voice on the National Council.

S/M Jeremy Owens said if the issue of voting rights required a change in the Royal Charter that would trigger another vote at a future Conference, though the National President said the pursuit of enhancements could continue in the interim.

With S/M Jimmy Tubman (Tyne) and second S/M Christopher Lewarne (Spennymoor) promising good shopping, countryside and sightseeing as well as a great location, delegates voted unanimously in Motion 9 to accept Tyne branch's offer to host the 2012 conference.

S/M Martin Barron (Watford), again backed by St Neot's, successfully piloted Motion 10 to approval, paving the way for branches to be able to seek clarification of matters contained in the Annual Report and Accounts, through the General Secretary.

The proposal was backed by the National Council.

Motion 11 sought to change Area Bye-Law A8 so that each

area would be required to hold at least three meetings a year rather than the current four.

The move, proposed by Frome and seconded by Helston, would still allow other areas to hold four or more meetings a year, but could save costs for areas such as No 4 who were struggling to fulfil their remit – money which they said could be put to better use, such as charitable causes.

The National Council view, represented by Area 1 member S/M Foley, opposed the motion because “when does three become two, and two become one?”

After a lively exchange of views between delegates supporting and opposing the move, and a final observation by S/M Tug Wilson (Frome) – whose area stretches 250 miles in length – that schools, universities and the Royal Navy, amongst others, operate on a three-term system, the vote went against the motion.

Approaching the home straight, Crosby (S/M Dave Tollerton) introduced Motion 12, asking that 2011 be designated the RNA Year of National Recruitment.

He told delegates that if the rate of decline in membership continued, there might not be an association in 20 years; only four areas showed an increase in membership, the best being an increase of 3.5 per cent in Area 8.

He said serving members was not the answer – new members must be recruited.

National Council backed the motion, which was carried unanimously.

The French contingent entered the fray with Motion 13, Aquitaine's S/M Ken Napier proposing that RNA standard bearers be allowed to wear the carrying strap over the right shoulder, in part to prevent medals being rubbed.

But though he was backed by host branch France Nord, delegates lined up to shoot the suggestion down, with S/M Arthur Ney (Wythenshawe) saying his Ceremonial Officer “nearly blew a gasket” when he saw the proposal and S/M Mick Kieran (Coventry) saying such a move could lead to bad backs.

The motion was heavily defeated.

The final Branch Motion, number 14, proposed by Gosport (S/M Bob Jones) and seconded by Crawley (S/M John Dale), was dealt with in short order.

With the National Council taking no view, delegates voted to amend Model Club Rule 12 to increase the amount payable by an appellant towards the appeal procedure from 50p to £5.



● Faces in a crowd – Lt (Q) Alison Devine and LNN Marine Batten at the memorial service held at the Landing Craft crew memorial at the ferry port in Ouistreham

Someone to watch over us...

ATTENDEES at the 2010 Conference were in very safe hands when it came to medical cover.

While the French health care service is widely admired, two serving RN personnel were part of the travelling party to provide first aid cover.

And the presence of Lt (Q) Alison Devine and LNN Marie Batten gave members attending the Conference a chance to show their appreciation for the work done by all Naval Service and UK personnel in Afghanistan.

The women both work at Selly Oak Hospital in Birmingham, but as Navy News went to press Lt Devine was preparing to move to Gibraltar.

She has already done a stint in Afghanistan, and LNN Batten will make her first visit to Camp Bastion in the spring of next year. Conference co-ordinator S/M David Glossop, of France Nord branch, pointed out the presence of the two women during the formal conference dinner, and observed that as well as saluting the bravery and sacrifice of the troops out on the front line, we should also remember the work done by people such as Alison and Marie, both theatre nurses who have had to work under difficult conditions and experienced the most horrific sights during the course of their daily routine.

Shipmates and their guests rose to their feet and gave the two special guests a standing ovation.

So to Plymouth

AS the last of the delegates headed away, across the Channel by ferry, south by car or perhaps starting a few days holiday, the spotlight turns to the West Country.

The team from Plymouth branch has been building up momentum since the city was successful in its bid for the 2011 National Conference, winning a ‘run-off’ against a proposal for a holiday camp on Hayling Island.



● RNA staff, delegates and observers enjoy an al fresco lunch in the Normandy countryside during the weekend of the annual conference

‘Defining moment’ for RNA

“JUST as our Royal Navy is approaching a moment that will define its future for the next decade at least and probably beyond, so I think the Royal Naval Association is approaching a defining moment of its own,” National President S/M John McAnally told delegates and observers.

“We face a number of challenges, and our response to them will set the course for the Association for some years to come.”

S/M McAnally said that there are some 22,000 life, full and associate members, and 38,000 serving

members, with the figure of 22,000 reflecting reductions of 1,000 to 2,000 a year as World War 2 and Korea generation veterans cross the bar.

In context, the ex-RN/RM cohort reduces by five per cent a year, and since the mid-1950s RN personnel numbers have reduced by two per cent a year.

Next year will see a focus on recruiting, “...but if we can't inspire ex-Service and serving members of the joys and benefits of our great association then we will have let our predecessors down, and the RNA will fade away.”

Disappointment at turn-out

A GROUP of Naval veterans who travelled to Normandy over the D-Day weekend have expressed their disappointment over the turnout at one of the ceremonies.

S/MS Colin Holden, chairman of Bognor Regis branch, and S/M Jim Peskett, branch secretary, attended the parade at the car ferry terminal on June 6.

“It was a stirring sight to see so many standards – it was Conference weekend,” said S/M Jim, who said that his colleague had been crossing the Channel for such ceremonies for the past 38 years.

The same afternoon they attended the only Naval memorial at Hermanville-sur-Mer, three miles or so west of Ouistreham.

“Only one standard, that from Bognor Regis, was there, and all together three RNA members were present, the other being S/M David Cottrell, whose idea it had been and it took well over five years of his own time and money



● Tributes are paid at the memorial at Hermanville-sur-Mer

to get it to actually happen.

“It was eventually put in place and dedicated in June 2001.

“We did meet a commander from Portsmouth Naval Base who was on holiday.

“He expressed great surprise about the lack of support and he

was sad that he was not properly dressed for the occasion.

“Why the apparent secrecy? It was the same two years ago, but at least there were two more shipmates than this time.

“And at least the locals turn out to pay their respects.”



● Sir Donald Gosling chats to a trainee sailor at HMS Raleigh

Association pays visit to Raleigh

MEMBERS of the council of the White Ensign Association met some of the Navy's newest recruits during a visit to HMS Raleigh.

A total of 17 members travelled to the Cornish establishment to see the range of training carried out.

And one of the visitors was Sir Donald Gosling, the president of the association, a registered charity founded jointly by the Royal Navy and City of London in 1958 to provide a resettlement, finance and employment advice service for serving and retired members of the Naval Service.

Sir Donald is also an honorary rear admiral in the RNR.

Also visiting were two former First Sea Lords, Admiral the Lord Boyce and Admiral Sir Jonathon Band.

Council members met a group of final-week recruits and saw them complete their final exercise before their passing-out parade.

The visitors toured the Submarine School, and were taken out on to the water in the RN's latest Pacific 24 sea boats.

Trainee logisticians prepared and served lunch at the Defence Maritime Logistics School.

The association is now firmly established as one of the prime links between the Royal Navy, the City, commerce and industry, its role having developed and expanded over the years to include the provision of advice on a much wider range of personal administration matters.

Further details of the White Ensign Association are available at www.whiteensign.co.uk



● Collingwood's marchers get some practice in on the roads of Shropshire

Best feet forward

SAILORS from HMS Collingwood have begun preparing for the challenge of a lifetime, when they take part in the 94th four-day Nijmegen Marches this month.

As the only Royal Navy team competing this year, the Phase 2 trainees, many of whom have only been in the Navy for six months, will be marching for the honour of their Service.

Beginning their preparations in earnest, they recently completed an 80km yomp around the Shropshire countryside near RAF Cosford, which ultimately gained them qualification into the Nijmegen Marches.

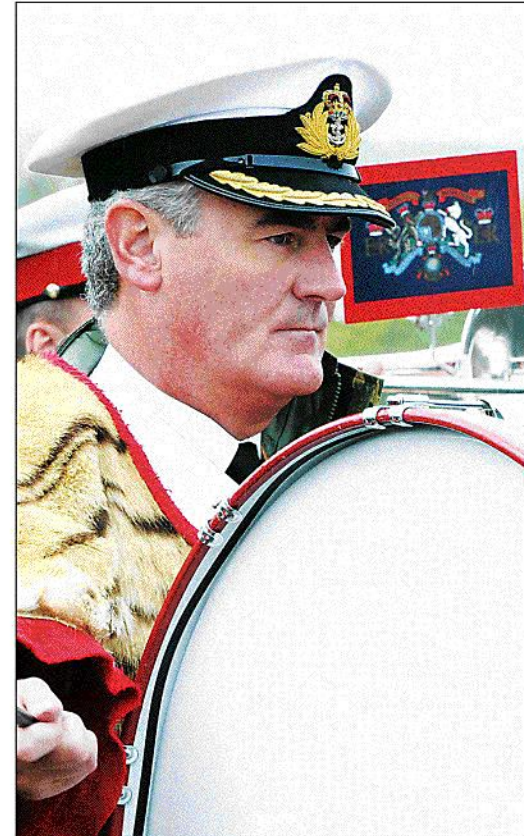
Proudly flying the White Ensign and carrying a minimum of 10kg in weight in their day sacks, the sailors rose to the challenge of the 80km march where they exhibited a variety of military competencies,

including leadership, man-management and teamwork, together with physical and mental resilience.

Team leader CPO Taffy Blackford said: "The commitment and effort our sailors displayed achieving this difficult and arduous venture showed true grit and determination.

"Every single one of them is immensely proud of themselves and is enormously excited about travelling to Holland to do the same again – but twice the distance."

The Nijmegen Marches will take place over the period July 20-23 in the Netherlands, involving teams from the British Armed Forces, civilians and military personnel from 24 different nations – more than 45,000 people are expected to take part this year.



● Capt Steve Murdoch plays bass drum for the RM Band, Plymouth; top right, Musn Kiri Wedlock mulls over an application for promotion

Masters of the deep

TWO sailors from HMS Cornwall have achieved a top diving qualification by taking to the water in exotic locations throughout the world.

LS Steve Murphy and ET Rebecca King were presented with their qualifications after diving at the Seychelles, Salalah, Malta, Gibraltar and then back to the UK to complete their Dive Master qualification.

The PADI qualification was

presented by Simon Chance, manager PADI International Resort, on board HMS Cornwall.

To reach the benchmark the pair had to complete a certain number of dives within a set period – 50 dives in seven months.

One of their first dives was in the Dubai Aquarium, with sand tiger sharks, rays, a whale and a variety of other fish.

While in Malta the sailors dived on sunken destroyer HMS Maori.

Snorkers? Good-oh!

PIG-rearing submariner John Popplewell has struck gold again with his award-winning snorkers.

Following success at last year's Taste of Cornwall competition, Popplewell's Pedigree Pigs won gold at the British Pig Association Spring Pedigree Sausage competition at the Devon County Show.

CPO Popplewell – who runs Little Keasts smallholding and B&B at Draynes, near Liskeard, with his wife Karen – currently serves in Devonport and is due to leave the Navy in November after almost 39 years service.

"Two years, two counties and two golds, we are really chuffed to bits," said CPO Popplewell.

"We once again would like to thank all our customers in and around the naval base for their continued support and encouragement."

New boss drops in

NEW Defence Secretary Dr Liam Fox has paid a visit to Royal Navy personnel deployed in the UK Maritime Component Commander HQ in Bahrain – part of his first series of operational theatre visits.

Among those he met were Cdre Tim Fraser, UK Maritime Component Commander, and Cdre Chris Richards, Commander Task Force (Iraqi Maritime).



● Christopher Dungey (centre) with his father, WO Paul Dungey (right) and grandfather, former submariner John Dungey

Picture: Dave Sherfield

Father to son, to son, to son

A TRAINEE submariner at HMS Raleigh represents the fourth generation of his family to serve in the Royal Navy.

Christopher Dungey, who is training as a logistician at the Cornish establishment, is following in the footsteps of his father Paul, a warrant officer at Navy Command in Portsmouth, and his uncle Mark, a chief petty officer on board HMS Chatham.

Stepping further back, Christopher's grandfather John Dungey served as a submariner between 1962 and 1984, while his great-grandfather, Lenny Hunter, saw active duty in minesweepers during World War 2.

Both Paul – who also started

his naval career at Raleigh – and John were there to see the next generation leave basic training.

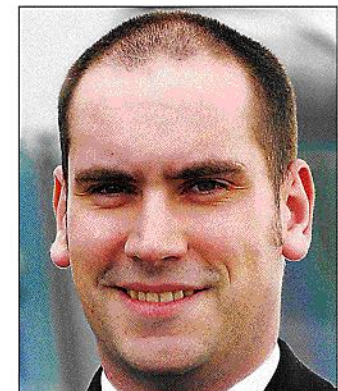
Paul said: "I'm pleased as Punch that Christopher's chosen to join the Royal Navy."

"He's phoned me most nights during his training to tell me what he's been doing."



● At 19 years of age Dexy Barter (right) is not exactly grizzled with age. But it was the experience of his 17-year-old younger brother Sonnetti which prompted Dexy to join the Navy, and Sonnetti – now undergoing training as a warfare specialist at HMS Collingwood – was allowed to travel to Cornwall to watch Dexy's passing-out parade. The brothers' careers will continue in parallel as Dexy is also to train as a warfare specialist, so will join Sonnetti – the Navy light flyweight boxing champion – at Collingwood, close to their Portsmouth home

Picture: Dave Sherfield



● OC Malcolm Black

Scouting award for Malcolm

A ROYAL Navy officer cadet has won a top scouting award – but his training programme means he will miss out on picking it up in person from Chief Scout Bear Grylls.

Malcolm Black joined the Senior Service as a Marine Engineer Officer in January, and has been undergoing Initial Fleet Time in HMS Ark Royal, currently on Exercise Auriga 2010.

But wherever Malcolm is, the 77th Glasgow Scouts (disabled) group will never be far from his mind.

And now the patrol leader with the Network Scouts, in his tenth year with the 77th, has been awarded the Chief Scout's Commendation Award.

Malcolm joined the scouts when he was eight and he says he has never looked back.

However, it wasn't until he wanted to get his Social Services badge that he realised there was a scout group for the disabled.

"I only initially turned up to do my four weeks to get my badge signed off, but the bug took and I've been going to the Network Scouts ever since," said Malcolm, whose father was in the RAF and whose uncle is a former Royal.

The 77th Glasgow Scouts work solely with disabled children and young adults who wish to experience the opportunities open to other Scout groups – although the Scout movement is all about integration, the 77th are able to offer specialised help.

Expeditions which Malcolm has organised have included caving and kayaking in the Lake District and a tour of London.

Malcolm said it was "a fantastic experience" to serve in the "iconic" carrier, but his future most likely lies in the Submarine Service.

Ukrainians call

TWENTY high-flying personnel from the Ukraine National Defence Academy visited Portsmouth Naval Base as part of a week-long visit to the UK designed to enhance their understanding of the British Armed Forces.

The delegates, all potential future leaders of the Ukrainian Armed Forces, toured the naval base, looked over Type 23 frigate HMS Kent and were also welcomed to Navy Command HQ.

They also visited MOD Main Building in Whitehall and Shrivenham.

Falklands linchpin retires

WITH his antecedents, it was inevitable that Lt Cdr John Maskell-Bott would have a military career.

His paternal grandfather was a stoker at Jutland, and his father served with the Grenadier Guards then the Royal Military Police.

His maternal grandfather served in H and L-class submarines, mostly in the Med, and his father met his mother, a member of the Women's Royal Auxiliary Corps, on a troopship returning from Singapore.

His father-in-law was a Naval Engineer Maintenance Test Pilot, and his son is a WEO in the Submarine Service and his nephew is serving with the Grenadier Guards in Afghanistan.

Lt Cdr Maskell-Bott, who took up a post in the Falklands in mid-2003, recently retired as SO2 J9 Liaison and Officer Commanding Hillside after 40 years Naval service.

John joined up in September 1969 as an artificer apprentice, and did 12 months training at sea in HMS Jupiter before entering the Silent Service in early 1974 in HMS Swiftsure as a marine engineer, then at HMS Vulcan as an instructor of Swiftsure-class nuclear power control systems.

Completing his officer training circuit in the early 1980s, he visited the Falklands for the first time in HMS Spartan, then spent most of his time ashore, at Foxhill, Devonport, Culdrose, Portsmouth and Swindon, before moving to the South Atlantic.

He found his role as liaison between military and civilian very rewarding, and hopes to spend part of the year in the Falklands during retirement.

John's last day of duty saw him don his Number One uniform for the final time to celebrate the Queen's birthday in Stanley.

Bahrain handover

CDRE Tim Fraser has taken over from Cdre Tim Lowe as UK Maritime Component Commander in the Middle East.

The handover was conducted during a ceremony at the US Fifth Fleet Headquarters in Bahrain.

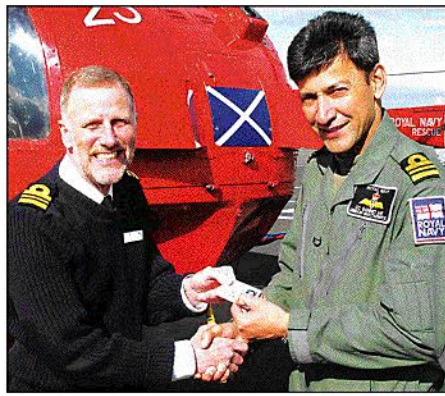
The new man also takes on the role of Deputy Commander Combined Maritime Forces (CMF).

Having served in the post for 19 months, Cdre Lowe is returning to the UK to take up the post of Commodore, Maritime Warfare School at HMS Collingwood.

Cdre Fraser joined the Royal Navy in 1982.

He has extensive experience of serving at sea, including commanding the aircraft carrier HMS Illustrious and Type 42 destroyers Gloucester and Cardiff.

On assuming command Cdre Fraser said: "This is one of the most complex maritime areas that the Royal Navy operates in. I am looking forward to working alongside our coalition partners in the CMF focusing on our core aim of improving maritime security."



Forty and out for Bob

FORTY years and one day after signing on the dotted line, Lt Cdr Bob Faulks has handed in his RN ID card to the CO of HMS Gannet, Lt Cdr Debdash Bhattacharya (pictured left).

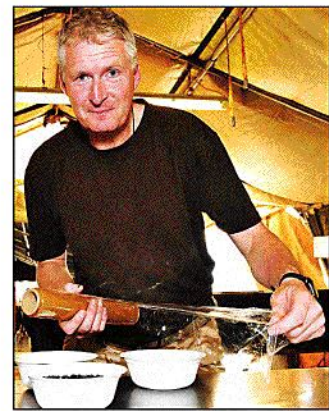
Bob specialised as an aircrew observer after completing officer training, and over the subsequent four decades served around the world, including being flight commander of a Naval Air Squadron on board the Canberra during the Falklands Conflict, an exchange with the US Navy, serving on board carriers HM Ships Illustrious and Invincible, and completing three appointments at HMS Gannet, most notably as Operations Officer.

He left full-time Naval service and joined the RNR Air Branch in 1996.

Bob, who runs a busy health centre in Irvine as practice manager, was presented with a written citation from First Sea Lord Admiral Sir Mark Stanhope.

Gannet's CO said: "Bob's dedicated service to the Royal Navy and Royal Naval Reserve over a period of 40 years is truly impressive."

"I feel honoured that he chose to spend his last day of service with us at HMS Gannet, and I have no doubt that he will continue to feel a part of the community that is the Fleet Air Arm for years to come."



● Dave Williamson RMR

Heat is on for RM Reservist

WHEN customs officer Dave Williamson takes a break from his day job, you may find him cooking – but this is no hobby.

Because Dave, 48, is a Royal Marines Reservist who is currently working in the kitchens of Forward Operating Base (FOB) Jackson in the Sangin area of Helmand Province, Afghanistan.

It is the first tour of duty for the Warrington man, and he said he's getting used to his new workplace – despite the heat.

"It's absolutely, totally different from my day job but I'm definitely still loving it," he said.

"Settling in was difficult at first – acclimatising while spending all day on your feet."

"But coping with the heat is not a problem now, although it's only going to get hotter."

And hot means hot.

The temperature outside is already well into the thirties and rising fast, but in the galley the mercury rises much higher – in the height of the Afghan summer, when it's around 55°C outside, the galley can be as hot as 72°C.

Dave copes by keeping himself hydrated: "I drink a lot of water – at least three litres a day."

Working alongside Dave is a team of six chefs who provide three square meals a day for the several hundred people living there – 40 Commando RM, all attached ranks, Afghan interpreters and all the locally-employed civilians.

A typical day for the chefs means getting up at 0430hrs and preparing breakfast – there is always a cooked breakfast – lunch offers four main choices with vegetables, and fruit bars and packets of mixed nuts, then there is a lull before preparation for dinner begins.

Dinner offers three options, plus a soup starter and dessert, and with a bit of luck the chefs can knock off work by about 2030hrs.

Navy ties in with Panthers

THE Royal Navy has become strategic partners of the Peterborough Panthers speedway team as recruiters seek potential submariners, fast jet pilots and engineering technicians.

Lt Matt Paterson, one of the regional business managers with the Naval Regional Command Eastern England, believed the Panthers' outlook matched that of the type of people the Navy is looking to recruit in those three key areas.

So Matt will be taking his RN visibility team and mobile recruiting assets to each of the Sky Sports Elite League team's home games this season, and hopes to talk to young fans about their career choices.

Sultan top man

THE RN Engineering Training School has a new boss – Cdre Mark Slawson.

HMS Sultan trains Marine and Air Engineer officers and technicians and is the largest engineering training facility in Europe, teaching more than 2,000 RN apprentices every year.

Cdre Slawson also assumes the mantle of Commandant of the Defence College of Electro-Mechanical Engineering, with sites at Bordon, Arborfield and St Athan.

Arfur wins medal for logistics work

A SENIOR rate serving in HMS Ocean has been lauded by a city livery company for his efforts in Afghanistan.

WO(CS) 'Arfur' English has been awarded the Royal Navy Medal by the Worshipful Company of Carmen for being the most outstanding non-commissioned logistician across the entire Navy, following his exemplary performance within the UK's Joint Force Support Headquarters in Afghanistan last year.

Arfur was deployed to Afghanistan for six months and was responsible for more than 2,300 Army, RAF and Royal Navy logisticians, being in charge of every aspect of support for all of the UK forces in theatre.

His work included managing a complex supply chain, moving equipment, stores and feeding, accommodating and administering UK forces.

Arfur also monitored national and coalition operations and events, as well as the initial response actions across the entire field of logistics, such as attacks on convoys and bases – including Kandahar, where he was based.

He watched over any delays within the supply chain caused by local unrest or disruption at border crossings and along supply routes, or direct security threats to people, supplies and equipment.

To do this he had to not only understand the implications to operations of each incident and deal regularly with command HQ in the UK and in theatre, but



● WO 'Arfur' English on board HMS Ocean

he had to do it whilst working wholly outside his mainstream specialisation of catering services.

Drawing on his logistics experience and broader military understanding gained through service in submarines and surface ships, combined with a natural ability to apply sailors' common sense, WO English was well-equipped to undertake the challenges of this appointment.

His citation says the senior rate's adaptability, professionalism and outstanding performance in arduous conditions mark him out as a truly Joint and Naval logistician and a warrant officer of some calibre.

For the past five centuries, the Worshipful Company of Carmen has served both the City of London and the transport industry.

Dating back to the 13th Century,

the fellowship of Carters carried Royal charters around London.

Today, the Carmen's goal is to reflect the industry in all its modes through personal fellowship, with the focus on surface transport, including road and rail, goods and passengers, and to recognise and promote achievement and the advancement of knowledge in the transport profession.

Skills for life in Ocean

BIKERS in HMS Ocean stand a better chance of a safer future thanks to the efforts of a shipmate.

LET Grant Midworth arranged an Enhanced Rider Scheme package for the bikers to ensure they have the skills to stay safe.

With many sailors commuting home from their base port each weekend, motorbikes are a popular mode of transport.

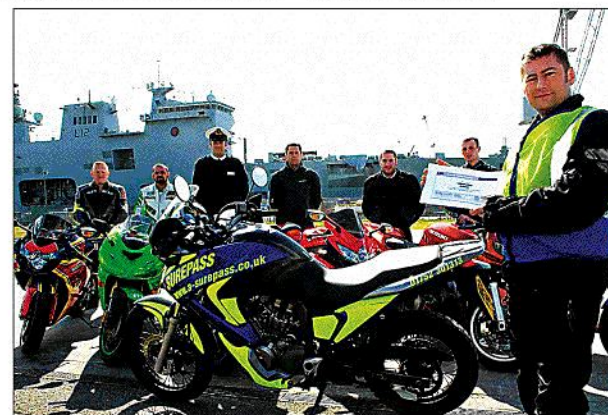
However, motorcyclists are by far the most vulnerable of all road users – in Britain alone the death and serious injury rate is 16 times higher if you

ride a bike than if you drive a car.

In 2007 the Driving Standards Agency launched the Enhanced Rider Scheme aimed at saving lives, and the scheme has been promoted on board as one of a number of initiatives aimed at ensuring sailors remain 'Fit 2 Fight'.

"The fitness and welfare of our people is something we take very seriously on board Ocean," said Lt Cdr Brewer, the ship's First Lieutenant.

"If this course prevents someone from being injured on the road it will be worthwhile."



Safety trophy for Junglies

THE Navy's coveted prize for flight safety has been awarded to the Commando Helicopter Force.

Royal Marines and Royal Naval personnel of the CHF gathered to watch Rear Admiral Tom Cunningham, Chief of Staff (Aviation) present the Fleet Air Arm's Bambara Flight Safety Trophy for 2009 to the youngest member of 845 NAS, AET Russell Elliot, on behalf of the CHF.

The prize is awarded annually to the FAA unit that is assessed as having the best flight safety record, and the CHF is a group of four RN squadrons and supporting elements, integrated under the command of an HQ, established to operate Sea Kings and Lynx in support of UK forces.

● Chief of Staff (Aviation) Rear Admiral Tom Cunningham presents the Bambara Trophy to AET Russell Elliot



where
to look

Defence Internal Briefs (DIBs)

44/10: Emergency Budget – Public Sector pay freeze
43/10: Publication of the Saville Inquiry report
42/10: Doubling of Operational Allowance
41/10: The Prime Minister's visit to Afghanistan – summary
39/10: Defence Secretary's objectives and priorities
38/10: Royal Centre for Defence Medicine Clinical Unit – move of clinical services to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital Birmingham
36/10: New Defence Ministerial team and responsibilities
35/10: Countdown to Armed Forces Day 2010 – one month to go
34/10: Implementing Government efficiencies to support £6 billion of savings in 2010-11

Defence Instructions and Notices

DIN 2010 DIN01-115: Ministry of Defence Civilian Lesbian Gay Bisexual & Transgender (LGBT) official participation in London Pride March 3 Jul 10
DIN 2010 DIN01-114: MOD Lesbian Gay Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) forum on July 1 followed by Quad Service LGBT Conference July 2 2010
DIN 2010 DIN01-113: Introduction of Charge METOC
DIN 2010 DIN01-112: Formation of the Defence Cultural Specialist Unit and Cultural Specialist courses
DIN 2010 DIN01-111: Operational Working Allowance
DIN 2010 DIN01-110: Requirement for Naval Service personnel to hold a valid European Health Insurance card (EHIC)
DIN 2010 DIN01-109: Publication of revised JSP 763 MOD Bullying & Harassment procedures and JSP 831 Service complaints
DIN 2010 DIN01-108: Senior Officer's course – NATO Defence College, Rome
DIN 2010 DIN01-107: NHS Pension Scheme – Pension choice exercise
DIN 2010 DIN01-106: Full Integration Of Weapon Engineering (WE) and Information Systems (IS) Engineering Specialisations
DIN 2010 DIN01-105: Revised messing and single accommodation charges for MOD civilians temporarily residing in Service messes in the UK
DIN 2010 DIN01-102: Day of Prayer for the Armed Forces – Thursday June 24 2010
DIN 2010 DIN02-010: Introduction of new vetting system (Cerberus)
DIN 2010 DIN02-009: Handling MOD personal data
DIN 2010 DIN03-013: HMS Vengeance and HMS Victorious transition to and from G Role (Gold Crew)
DIN 2010 DIN03-012: Freedom of navigation – RN procedures and practice
DIN 2010 DIN03-010: JSP 510 International Defence Training: publication of version 4.
DIN 2010 DIN05-038: Handling and use of commercially sensitive information
DIN 2010 DIN05-037: British Forces Post Office (BFPO) Postal Inspection and Advisory Team (PIAT)
DIN 2010 DIN05-036: Commissioning of Fleet Forward Support (Air) as 1710 (Forward Support) Naval Air Squadron
DIN 2010 DIN05-035: Information risk policy
DIN 2010 DIN07-084: Information Management courses for training year 2010-11 at the Defence Academy College of Management and Technology
DIN 2010 DIN07-083: Intermediate Command and Staff course (Maritime) (ICSC(M))
DIN 2010 DIN07-082: Tri-Service university short course programme – academic year 2010/11
DIN 2010 DIN07-081: Education courses at NETS Learning Centres East (HMS Nelson), West (HMS Drake) and North (HMS Neptune, incl HMS Caledonia)
DIN 2010 DIN07-078: Defence policy on computer users' training
DIN 2010 DIN07-076: Defence Diving School courses for training year 2010/11
DIN 2010 DIN07-075: Selection of RN/RM candidates for legal training
DIN 2010 DIN09-003: Armed Forces Day June 26 2010
DIN 2010 DIN10-031: Army Waterskiing and Wakeboarding Championship 2010 – September 6-10 2010
DIN 2010 DIN10-030: Officers' Riding Course
DIN 2010 DIN10-029: RAFSA Dinghy Sailing Championship (Brady Trophy)

Galaxy Messages

GALAXY 2010-10: Changes to Logistics Branch specialist titles
GALAXY 2010-09: Armed Forces Continuous Attitude Survey 2009 results

Royal Navy Temporary Memoranda

Issue 05/10 Nos 096/10: Formation of the Navy Command's Third Sector Organisation
Issue 05/10 Nos 099/10: The Sports Amenities and Benevolence Scheme (SABS)
Issue 05/10 Nos 100/10: Fleet HM capability
Issue 06/10 Nos 117/10: Maritime Warfare School bridge simulator booking procedure and guide
Issue 06/10 Nos 118/10: Introduction of Naval Service manning and training margin categories and JPA positions
Issue 06/10 Nos 119/10: Shortening of the ship's Pilot Ladder
Issue 06/10 Nos 120/10: RN Tempest Policy
Issue 07/10 Nos 122/10: Royal Navy and Royal Marines' Competitive Combat Shooting participation in the Central Skill at Arms Meeting (CENTSAM) 2010
Issue 07/10 Nos 123/10: Sideways entry to the Dental Hygienist Branch
Issue 07/10 Nos 124/10: Royal Marines Band Service: candidate for promotion (career progression path)
Issue 07/10 Nos 125/10: Revision Of Navy Command Environmental Management questionnaire and guidance notes
Issue 07/10 Nos 127/10: RN Trophy Fund – volunteer trustee required
Issue 07/10 Nos 129/10: The Naval Service Prizes and Awards Fund (the Charity) charity no: 1117794 / 6
Issue 07/10 Nos 130/10: Joint Service Rowing Regatta – Wed July 21 2010 Royal Navy Calling Notice for entries
Issue 07/10 Nos 131/10: Br2170(4) electronic version for submariners
Issue 07/10 Nos 132/10: Maritime Information Management governance policy and structure afloat (RN afloat and mobile RN/RM, Commands and deployed units)
Issue 07/10 Nos 136/10: Divisional management and documentation mandatory checking of personal information held on JPA
Issue 07/10 Nos 137/10: Review of Naval Engineering
Issue 07/10 Nos 138/10: Aspects of the Summary Discipline process

Call a chef
a chef

FIRST, in the interest of fair and open reporting, let us here at Navy News confess to a certain bias against the Logistician (Catering Services (Preparation)) title and others of similar ilk. You may perhaps have noticed...

But it seems we were not the only ones not entirely taken with the new branch names.

And the Navy's senior officers have been listening carefully to the opinions of the men and women who live with and work with the new titles.

Despite huge effort across the Navy to make the new Logistics branch specialist titles work since their introduction in 2007, careful and detailed research over the past nine months has shown that a strong loyalty remains to the more traditional forms of address.

While the name Logistics branch is widely accepted as a modernisation that better reflects the level and depth of the various skills called in to play, some of the specialist titles have not been so well received.

So a decision has been taken as the result of a formal study which included focus groups of logisticians, discussion with senior officers, both within the branch and outside, and engagement with commanding officers.

Two areas have attracted significant debate – and these are the focus of the changes: the titles of junior rates of the Logistics Branch; and simplification of verbal address for all logistics personnel.

One of the issues that we have long had here at Navy News when writing about logisticians is the inability to differentiate between the junior rating chefs and stewards without descending into the rather long-winded Logistician (Catering Services (Preparation)) as compared to Logistician (Catering Services (Delivery)).

Sometimes this distinction is important in a story. And indeed far more so in Naval and shipboard life.

But now the subspecialisation titles of Chef and Steward have been reintroduced for the junior rates.

However at senior level the term Catering Services remains, as this does better reflect the broader remit of their roles.

There also remains a distinction between the formal written title and address, and the informal verbal address which will be used in pipes (and in this paper the majority of the time).

So formerly Logistician (Catering Services (Preparation)) Smith is now Logistician (Chef) Smith, and informally Chef Smith. (Which if nothing else will save some ink...)

The Supply Chain title has been strongly supported by former Stores Accountants, and



● A Chef once more: Logs(CH) 'Bugsy' Malone or Chef to his friends
Picture: LA(Phot) Gaz Weatherston

Formal address	Informal address	Abbrev.
Logistician (Chef) Smith	Chef Smith	Logs(Ch)
Logistician (Steward) Smith	Steward Smith	Logs(Std)
Leading Logistician (Chef) Smith	Leading Chef Smith	LLogs(Ch)
Leading Logistician (Steward) Smith	Leading Steward Smith	LLogs(Std)
Petty Officer Logistician (Catering Services) Smith	PO Caterer Smith	POLogs(CS)
Chief Petty Officer Logistician (Catering Services) Smith	Chief Caterer Smith	CPOLogs(CS)
Warrant Officer Logistician (Catering Services) Smith	Warrant Officer Caterer Smith	WOLogs(CS)
Logistician (Supply Chain) Smith	SC Smith	Logs(SC)
Leading Logistician (Supply Chain) Smith	LSC Smith	LLogs(SC)
Petty Officer Logistician (Supply Chain) Smith	PO SC Smith	POLogs(SC)
Chief Petty Officer Logistician (Supply Chain) Smith	Chief SC Smith	CPOLogs(SC)
Warrant Officer Logistician (Supply Chain) Smith	Warrant Officer SC Smith	WOLogs(SC)
Logistician (Writer) Smith	Writer Smith	Logs(Wtr)
Leading Logistician (Writer) Smith	Leading Writer Smith	LLogs(Wtr)
Petty Officer Logistician (Writer) Smith	PO Writer Smith	POLogs(Wtr)
Chief Petty Officer Logistician (Writer) Smith	Chief Writer Smith	CPOLogs(Wtr)
Warrant Officer Logistician (Writer) Smith	Warrant Officer Writer Smith	WOLogs(Wtr)

over the course of the research the decision was taken to keep the new name, but provide a less unwieldy abbreviation for daily use – so Logistician Supply Chain is now shortened to SC and LSC for junior ratings, and POSC, ChiefSC and Warrant Officer SC for senior rates.

The title Logistician Personnel has also prompted fierce debate, with a majority wishing to return to the traditional form of Writer.

While neither title fully reflects the broad range of administration and information management

demanded by the role, the feeling was that as a Writer, the logistician could look back on a long and proud history and a strong sense of identity particular to the Naval service.

While the changes of address have already come into force, it will take some time for the name changes to be filtered through into the JPA change programme.

New badges with the updated specialisations will be issued once the new order is placed, but in the meantime the current badges will still be seen around the Fleet.

British links strong with US Navy

THE US Navy's USS Winston S Churchill, named in honour of the UK's wartime Prime Minister, was navigated into Portsmouth by the Royal Navy's Lt Brian Drewett in June, writes Lt Cdr Heather Lane.

The ship, an Arleigh Burke class destroyer, was visiting the south of England, coinciding with the 66th anniversary weekend of D-Day.

The USS Winston S Churchill is the only US Navy ship to have a Royal Navy officer assigned permanently to the ship's company in honour of the ship's namesake.

As part of the unique personnel exchange programme, Lt Brian Drewett is currently serving as the ship's navigator for a two-year tour of duty.

Since the ship commissioned, five of the Royal Navy's top young navigators have had the privilege

of taking the ship around the world.

Lt Drewett is responsible to the ship's Commanding Officer, Cdr Juan Orozco, for the navigational safety of the vessel, for planning and preparing charts and routes, for anticipating weather patterns and for additional navigational training of watchkeepers on the bridge.

Cdr Orozco said: "The ship is excited and proud to be visiting the UK; we've worked really hard over the last few months.

"I know the ship's company can't wait to get out and about over the weekend to some of the unique and historic places in England; this will be a real treat before our real work starts in earnest maintaining maritime security in the Gulf region."



● Lt Brian Drewett



Picture: Dave Sherfield

Disaster strikes
at Raleigh
again and again...

IN THE past decade the world has been struck by, or suffered, 3,852 disasters.

They've claimed the lives of three quarters of a million people. Well, that's cheered you up.

But it's also the reason why delivering humanitarian aid is at the heart of what the RN does – Haiti, Sri Lanka, and a cluster of Caribbean islands have all benefitted from relief provided by British sailors and marines.

And it's why junior sailors from HMS Raleigh are now being introduced to disaster relief for three days each month.

For several years, trainee chefs, stewards, writers and supply chain folk (*hurrah, the old names are back!* – Ed) have headed to the Army camp at Penhale, between Perranporth and Newquay, for a weekend of basic leadership training.

With that closing, another suitable site for leadership training was sought. Tregantle Fort, one of numerous Victorian fortifications ringing Devonport dockyard on both sides of the Tamar, was chosen.

The location and scale of the old fort, barely two miles from Raleigh, means that not only trainees from the logistics school face leadership and teamwork tasks, but also submariners and seaman specialists undergoing training at the Torpoint establishment.

And so once a month, 60 or so sailors will march out of Raleigh on a Friday afternoon to spend the weekend at Tregantle.

"Rather than 'lift and shift' what we did at Penhale, we decided to create something new, more realistic. Give it a scenario and the sailors realise why they are doing this," explained Lt Cdr Jo Wall from the logistics school.

"There'll be a really diverse range of people coming through – on the first weekend we had a 62-year-old RFA sailor here."

As you'd expect from a Victorian fort, accommodation is spartan (female sailors at least don't have to head outside to reach the heads/showers, unlike their male counterparts), but then the trainees aren't here to relax.

The three-day exercise, Maritime Teamwork, is expected to test low-level leadership skills and sailors' ability to work together outside the 'comfort zone' of a

ship or submarine.

What you won't find at Tregantle is the full disaster treatment provided by Bull Point in Devonport naval base.

There's no fire. No flood.

What's expected of the trainees here is more basic: rescuing a casualty from a ravine, clearing a landing site for a helicopter, erecting a field hospital, building a pen for livestock (but obviously not too close to the helicopter site...).

They have to do all that within eight hours, irrespective of the weather.

For good measure, there's also a giant tyre run (which involves running around the fort with a, er, giant tyre) and a Land Rover pull (the clue's in the title) thrown in.

Instructors are looking less at methods and results – as they would at Bull Point – than the ability of trainees to work as a team, and for some to step to the fore.

Trainee submariner Ben Bardsley led a team who used wooden poles, ropes and pulleys to lift a piece of debris and free a person – the RN's very own Frank Spencer, Fred – trapped underground (*see picture above*).

"The worst part was having to tell people what to do because I've never done that before," he said.

"It was easier because I didn't really know them.

"I think as a team they did really well. There were some strong people who helped me through."

Logistician Francesca Gant took charge as a field hospital tent was put up within the 45-minute time limit.

"I enjoyed it," she said. "I delegated putting up the tent to one of the lads who'd done it before on his public services course, so I could concentrate on manpower and timings.

"It seemed to work well. I didn't have any problems taking charge and I'd do exactly the same again."

Watching their progress was WO 'Scooby' Drew of Corporate Squadron – the umbrella unit for junior rates undergoing their specialist training at Raleigh.

"The feedback from the trainees has been extremely positive," he said. "We'll continue to enhance the training package that we deliver during future exercises."

Government set out to put Forces first

AS WE all await announcements and plans for what the future holds for all of us under the new Government, we have taken the opportunity in this issue of *Navy News* to break down into bite size chunks the details that have so far emerged from the Coalition Programme for Government, the area we have focused on is unsurprisingly Defence, writes Jane Williams of the Naval Families Federation.

As part of his visit to Armed Forces Personnel to Afghanistan in June, David Cameron had this to say to the audience: "I want you to help me create a new atmosphere in our country, an atmosphere in which we back and revere and support our military."

He also said he wanted to "rewrite and republish the military covenant" – the pact of support between Britain and its armed forces – and put troops "front and centre of our national life again".

As the independent voice of Royal Navy and Royal Marines families we take forward your questions and concerns to a wide variety of forums and meetings, discussing trends and issues with not only the Chain of Command but up to and including Government Ministers and Ministerial Departments.

This past year alone saw over 300 commitments to represent families, including the Serving member of the family.

Now as we collectively look towards how policy change will impact on the Senior Service it is all the more important to make them aware of the consequences their policies and decisions make on the Naval Service family as a whole.

Defence
"The Government believes that we need to take action to safeguard our national security at home and abroad."

"We also recognise that we need to do much more to ensure that our Armed Forces have the support they need, and that veterans and their families are treated with the dignity that they deserve."

■ We will maintain Britain's nuclear deterrent, and have agreed that the renewal of Trident should be scrutinised to ensure value for money. Liberal Democrats will continue to make the case for alternatives. We will immediately play a strong role in the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference, and press for continued progress on multilateral disarmament.

■ We will aim to reduce Ministry of Defence running costs by at least 25 per cent

■ We will work to rebuild the Military Covenant by:

Ensuring that Service personnel's rest and recuperation leave can be maximised;

Changing the rules so that Service personnel only have to register once on the Service register;

Exploring the potential for including Service children as part of our proposals for a pupil premium;

Providing university and further education scholarships for the children of Servicemen and women who have been killed on active duty since 1990;

Providing support for ex-Service personnel to study at university;

Creating a new programme 'Troops to Teachers', to recruit ex-Service personnel into the teaching profession;

Providing extra support for veteran mental health needs; and

Reviewing the rules governing the awarding of medals.

■ We will double the operational allowance for Armed Forces personnel serving in Afghanistan, and include Armed Forces pay in plans for a fair pay review.

■ We will ensure that injured personnel are treated in dedicated military wards.

■ We will look at whether there is scope to refurbish Armed Forces' accommodation from efficiencies within Ministry of Defence.

■ We will support defence jobs through export that are used for legitimate purposes, not internal repression, and will work for a full international ban on cluster munitions.

We all look forward to the open consultation process that the Government is talking about, but please bear

in mind that NFF have the conduit to highlight Naval families concerns, so whatever you feel is important to put on the agenda, now is as good as it gets...

Please note that DIB 201042 was published on June 14, this details the doubling of Operational Allowance, it's not just for Afghanistan.

Introduction of Service Families Warrant Officers in Portsmouth.

Late May witnessed the start of a new and much-welcomed initiative to improve the levels of support provided by the Naval Base Commander to residents of Service Families Accommodation (SFA) and Defence Estates' housing officers in the Portsmouth port area.

Thanks to HMS Nelson, Excellent, Collingwood and Sultan, Capt Paul Lemkes, the Captain of the Naval Base, is now able to call on the Base Warrant Officers to assist him in carrying out his role as Local Service Commander for all SFA in the Portsmouth area.

Although Capt Lemkes and his staff in the Naval Base already play a central part in the local management of SFA, they are not always able, or best placed geographically, to provide the same degree of oversight of SFA estates that is more easily delivered elsewhere in the RN and which Senior Non-Commissioned Officers routinely provide at RM units and across the other Services.

The Base Warrant Officers have each been given responsibility for a major, or group of smaller, SFA estates in the Portsmouth area and, despite this not being a full-time role, by working closely with

Defence Estates' housing officers, the NFF, the NPFS Community Resource Teams, the local Naval Provost headquarters, HIVEs and others, it is hoped that their engagement will strengthen the Chain of Command's visibility of SFA matters.

BBC Songs of Praise at Selly Oak Hospital

Songs of Praise, the popular, long running music and worship programme from the BBC has filmed an episode at Selly Oak Hospital in Birmingham, the Royal Centre for Defence Medicine which provides care and rehabilitation for injured Service personnel.

This episode marks the centenary of Florence Nightingale's death and looks at nursing in its many guises throughout the last 100 years, including an interview from a Royal Naval nurse based at the hospital.

The episode will be broadcast on BBC 1 on July 25 2010.

YouTube

Did you know that MoD has a dedicated YouTube Channel? <http://www.youtube.com/user/defenceheadquarters>

JPA

A plea to all family members reading this edition of *Navy News*, please ask your serving loved one to make sure that JPA Next of Kin details are up to date and correct.

Homeport

The current issue of *Homeport* magazine includes 'A Year in the life of NFF', so to find out more about just how we represent the Royal Navy and Royal Marines families pick up a free copy or contact us...

We have interesting times ahead, to get in touch with NFF and tell us your views: e-mail admin@nff.org.uk, tel: 02392 654374, or write to: Castaway House, 311 Twyford Avenue, Portsmouth, PO2 8RN.

News just in...

The ongoing recruitment restrictions combined with significant staff turnover at all of the Housing Information Centres (HIC's) has had a serious impact on Defence Estates' ability to deliver and maintain an effective housing service.

After very serious consideration it has been decided that with effect from July 1 2010, the telephone system into all the HICs will close at 1500 hours daily. This will allow staff to focus on non telephone related activities.

There will be the opportunity to email each HIC and details of the email addresses will be published in the near future.

It is accepted that this will cause some inconvenience to our customers which is genuinely regretted.

■ Note from NFF, any changes and updates will be both on our website and in Navy News...



● Royal Marines on a patrol by PMT (Police Mentoring Troop) from Forward Operating Base (FOB) Jackson, Sangin

Picture: LA(Phot) Si Ethell

More money for front line

WITHIN his first month in office, Prime Minister David Cameron headed out to Afghanistan to meet the men and women of the military working in such harsh and demanding conditions.

During his visit, the PM announced the doubling of the Operational Allowance (OA).

The tax free allowance goes up from £14.51 to £29.02 per day, with payments backdated to May 6 2010.

This means that an operational tour to an appropriate area of six months will give personnel £5,281.64 tax free.

The allowance is paid to Service personnel deployed on Op Herrick in Afghanistan, Op Telic in Iraq and on Naval operations in the Gulf on Coalition Task Force Iraqi Maritime (CTF-IM).

Payment comes in the form of a single lump sum, which is paid at the conclusion of operational service. And the first payments at the new rate will be made this month.

The change in the allowance is anticipated to cost an additional £57 million.

The Prime Minister also used his visit to Afghanistan to announce an additional £67 million of funding to combat the threat of IEDs (improvised explosive devices).

However the recent Budget announcement of a two-year Public Sector pay freeze will affect members of the military who are earning over £21,000 – although the 2 per cent award decided by the Armed Forces Pay Review Body for 2010/11 is unaffected. (See DIB 44/10 for more detail.)



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Contact Nigel Huxtable at RNA HQ

Rm 209 Semaphore Tower, PP70, HM Naval Base, PORTSMOUTH PO1 3LT

Phone - 023 9272 3747 E-Mail - Nigel@royalnavalassoc.com

Website - www.royal-naval-association.com

Unity, Loyalty, Patriotism and Comradeship

The house that Jack built...

THEY say that 'Jack' is very resourceful, and recent events once again prove that the Senior Service can and does turn its hand to any task presented...

To explain why this high praise is being bestowed, a recent challenging situation has achieved a great outcome thanks to some quick thinking and fancy footwork by the Naval Families Federation and Royal Navy.

March this year saw the opening of the new Sub-HIC in Plymouth.

Just as life had started to settle down for the staff, a fire was started in an adjacent building affecting communications and business, then the freeze on recruitment saw temporary staff leave ahead of expected timescales...

All of this led to a real challenge for the staff allocating Service Families Accommodation (SFA) in the West Country (no surprises) as staffing was cut in half at the busiest time of year.

After a few telephone calls between the NFF and Captain of Base Devonport's office, two Naval Service staff under the care of the Recovery Cell have started at Plymouth Sub-HIC to man the phones and take messages for our families.

New staff are being recruited to fill the Defence Estates roles but in the meantime, fantastic, not only can callers get through, the allocation guys can get on with the vital role of identifying and offering SFA to moving families.

The Senior Service showing the way!

Top honours for engineers

THE International Naval Engineering Conference, organised by the Institute of Marine Engineering, Science and Technology, held in Portsmouth Naval Base attracted over 400 guests.

The event featured the Sir Donald Gosling Awards for authors aged 40 or under who present at the conference.

The chief executive Dr Marcus Jones said: "This year there were ten papers considered by the judges who certainly had a tough time deciding between them."

"The winners show the tremendous depth of knowledge of some extraordinarily talented young authors some of whom are serving officers in the Royal Navy and others are in industry and academia."

"We wish them well in their future endeavours and congratulate them on their INEC success."

The first prize was awarded to Lt Hugh Maddison – Superintendent Fleet Maintenance (Portsmouth) and Alan Davis, Supply Chain Manager, Hunt COM, BAE Systems for their paper *A quiet revolution in Hunt class MCMV operation and support*.

The second prize went to the four authors of *Stretching the future surface combatant: Examining the affordability benefits of a twin-variant ship* – Rick Goddard, Ian Randles, Lt Charles Golden, and Tim McDonald.

And the third and final award was made to Lt Cdr Fraser Work DE&S for *Development of multi-fuel, power dense engines for maritime combat craft*.

Making Waves

STORYBOOK Waves is a scheme that allows parents deployed overseas to create a special link with their children.

You can record a story for your child to listen to before you deploy, then music and sound effects are added and the finished CD sent to your child.

Wherever you are in the world, you can still be part of your child's bedtime routine, or whenever they want to listen to it.

Recordings take about 15 minutes, and can be done at any of the Storybook bases located around the UK.

Once edited with sound effects by one of the volunteer team, the finished CD will be sent to the address you supply some four to six weeks after you deploy.

If you would be interested in finding out more, contact: Portsmouth – The Learning Centre on 023 927 Ext 25292/24288 or Julie Meads (NPFS) on 07802 918521; Devonport – The Learning Centre on 9375 67597; Faslane – The Learning Centre on 93255 5971; Yeovilton – The Chaplaincy on 01935 454324.

So what do you think?

AFCAS TOP 10 POSITIVE ATTITUDES



AFCAS TOP 10 NEGATIVE ATTITUDES



It's your 2-6, on page and TV

NEED to get your message across to the rest of the RN?

The 2-6 TV DVD has been aligned with the Personnel Support Brief providing an enhanced package for use in sharing information.

Feedback received regarding the new-look 2-6 TV DVD is encouraging. Your thoughts and opinions are invaluable.

Please forward any

constructive ideas about what should be covered to WO1 Baz Cooke or Pauline Aquilina.

To feature in the Navy News 2-6 pages contact Lt Cdr Heather Lane or WO1 Cooke.

■ Lt Cdr Heather Lane, 93832

8809, FLEET-DCS-INFO-IC SO2

■ WO1 Baz Cooke, 93832

8821, FLEET-DCS-INFO-IC WO

■ Pauline Aquilina, 9621

85984

 **NAVY NEWS**

SHIP of the MONTH

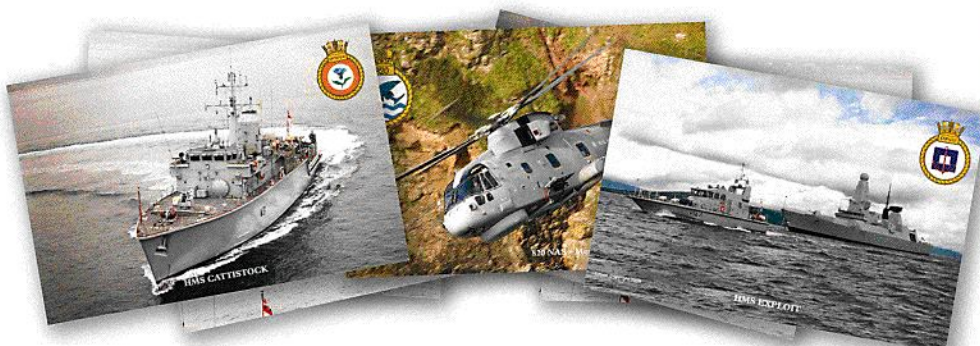
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(Older photographs will be in Black & White)

July 1970

'SPECS for specs' was the buzzword as it was announced that regulations about wearing spectacles were to be relaxed.

Under the new rules seaman officers below commander rank were allowed to wear glasses for distance viewing for the first time, provided their unaided vision was up to the required serving standard.

The policy change also affected officer recruits, who were acceptable in the Seaman specialisation "with one long-sighted eye and one short-sighted eye".

The rules were changed to increase the number of potential officer candidates coming forward.

And in the hope that it would improve seamen officers' eyesight generally, by encouraging the use of spectacles.

July 1990

RFA FORT Victoria notched up a number of firsts when she was named in June by the Duchess of York at a ceremony at Harland and Wolff, in Belfast.

She was the first ship to bear the name, the first auxiliary oiler replenishment (AOR) to be built for the Royal Navy, and the first Royal Fleet Auxiliary to be armed.

Fort Victoria was designed to provide the Royal Navy with a one-stop supply vessel for a wide range of dry stores and liquids, including diesel and aviation fuels, using the newly-developed replenishment at sea system.

The second ship of the class, RFA Fort George, was on order from Swan Hunters.

1970 1980 1990 2000 THE TIME OF YOUR LIVES

We flick back through the pages of Navy News to see which stories were drawing attention in past decades...



● HMS Speedy leaves Portsmouth Harbour on sea trials in May 1980

July 1980

HMS SPEEDY, the Navy's first hydrofoil and ninth ship of the name, was commissioned in HMS Vernon on June 14, with Vice Admiral Sir John Fieldhouse, Controller of the Navy, as principal guest at the ceremony.

The innovative ship had been built by Boeing Marine Systems, of Seattle, and fitted out by Vosper Thornycroft in Portchester.

The first HMS Speedy had been commanded by Lord Cochrane, whose great-grandson presented a picture of the ship in battle to her new namesake.

The new ship was also given an oil painting of Seattle and a photograph of the fifth Speedy, which was built by J I Thornycroft in Chiswick in 1893.

After her commissioning HMS Speedy set out for trials and crew training in Portland, to be put through her paces in a variety of roles.

May 2000

EVERY sailor and Royal Marine was awaiting the new PDR, or Personal Development Record, a breakthrough in principle and in technology.

It was the first time that individuals could record, review and plan their career paths and show civilian employers the transferable skills they had achieved during their time in the service.

Each PDR was an A4 ring-binder with pockets for various forms, certificates, appraisals and floppy disks.

The total weight of PDR packs for the Navy was about 70 tonnes and fourteen 40ft articulated lorries were required to deliver them all.

Honours

Appointments to the Military Division of the Most Honourable Order of the Bath

As Knight Grand Cross
Admiral Sir Mark Stanhope
As Knight Commander
Lt Gen James Benjamin Dutton Royal Marines
As Companions
Major Gen Garry Stuart Robison Royal Marines
Vice Admiral Peter John Wilkinson

Appointments to the Military Division of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire

As Commanders
Cdre Campbell Stuart Christie
Capt Michael Edward Farrage
Capt Richard Farrington
Rear Admiral Ian Moncrieff
As Officers
Cdr Matthew James Avison
Cdr Darren Cartwright
Col Robert Graham Cundy Royal Marines
Cdr Kevin Gomm
Cdre Steven Charles Ramm
Capt Ian Michael Robinson
Royal Naval Reserve
Cdr Thomas Grenville Sharpe
Cdr Paul Kenneth Shawcross
Cdr Steven Luigi Smith
As Members
Lt Jeffrey Richard Bevan
WO1 WS(AWT) Andrew Neil Collings

Maj Nicholas Alan Griffiths

Royal Marines

Chaplain John Hill

WO2 ET(ME S) Kevin Alan Keenan

Lt Cdr Brian Stuart Leyshon

Maj Christopher Sydney Middleton Royal Marines

WO1 (MAA) Susan Morgan

WO2 Gavin O'Connell Royal Marines

Sgt Stephen Kenton Perry

Royal Marines

Lt Cdr Richard Michael John Sutton

LLogs(CS) Rachael Talton

Lt Cdr Dain Jason Thorne

WO1(CIS) Timothy Mark Trevarthen

Queen's Volunteer Reserves Medal

Maj Mark Gibson Royal Marine Reserve

Appointments to the Civil Division of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire

As Member

1/O Richard Lavender Royal Fleet Auxiliary

Swap drafts

PO(UW) Pollard-Rice currently serving in HMS Iron Duke will swap for any Plymouth-based ship deployed, deploying or not. Contact 309-POUW3@a.dli.mod.uk.

Sports lottery

May 22: £5,000 - CPO C J Mitchell; £1,500 - LNA(SE) A J Senior; £500 - Art App R I Vincent-Spall.

May 29: £5,000 - Lt A J Hewitt; £1,500 - Lt S Blake; £500 - CPOMEA G C Evans.

June 5: £5,000 - PO D C Beever; £1,500 - PO P E Garland; £500 - CPO AEA(L) C D Halls.

June 14: £5,000 - PO MEML C J Wojcik; £1,500 - Mne A Cahill; £500 - Logs T A Young.

APRIL 2011

HMS Protector Association: Annual reunion to be held at the Royal Court Hotel, Coventry from April 29 to May 2. A dedication service will be held at the National Arboretum, Alrewas on May 1 at 1100. Contact Doug Harris at dougatspindrift@aol.com or tel: 01495 718870 or visit the website at http://www.hmsprotector.org

MAY 2011

Bulwark, Albion & Centaur Association: The 2011 AGM and reunion weekend is confirmed for South Downs Holiday Village, Bracklesham Bay, Chichester, commencing May 13. Three night package including gala dinner and entertainment for just £119. Please contact the secretary, Denis Askham at dnsaskham@aol.com or write to Blyden, Boyndie, Banff, Aberdeenshire, AB45 2LD or tel: 01261 861742. Bound to be very popular.

Ask Jack

HMS Diana: Seeking information of the whereabouts of David 'Taff' Dyte originally from Tredgar. We served in HMS Diana 1960-63. Contact Charlie Zammit at chazam@onvol.net or write to 58 St Rita Street, Birzebuga, BBG 1902, Malta.

HMS Renown: I served on HMS Renown (starboard) with a guy called Francis Phillip 'Nobby' Hall in communications mid 1980. We both left the Navy around 1988-90 and kept in contact until I got posted overseas to Barbados with my current company Shell. He use to live in Rainham, Kent and us in Romford, Essex but moved house and we never received his new address. From Barbados we then got moved to Houston, Texas where we currently live. If you know the whereabouts of Francis, Steven Leftly would love to hear from you, contact him at maggieleftly@yahoo.co.uk or write to 914 Dallas Street, Unit 307, Houston, Texas 77002, USA.

Apprentice J Fothergill: I collect books and have come into the possession of a volume entitled *Wonders of Salvage* with the inscription 'HMS Caledonia - Presented by the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to Apprentice J Fothergill for Meritorious Work - dated 1947'. I am most anxious to return it to its rightful owner and am mindful that he would now be in his 80s and may no longer be with us, though his family might like to get in touch. Contact Mr R F Quinton, 10 St Nicholas Road, Wallingford, Oxon, OX10 8HT or tel: 01491 202602.

John Fleming Lynch: I am writing in an attempt to locate my uncle, or his grave. He is/was John Fleming Lynch, born in New Zealand on February 3, 1931. He joined the Royal Navy and in 1959, on returning to England after leave, his address was given as Portsmouth Barracks and occupation

as a Naval Rating. We know he served in ships which observed nuclear testing, and that he possibly became ill in later years as a result. I believe he didn't like his first names and preferred to be called David. He would be 79 if still alive but we do believe that he is deceased. We will be in the UK in early September and would love to at least see his grave and get a photo for the family. If you are able to provide any information please contact Stewart Summersby at goldfish.129@hotmail.com or write to 57 Tahara Street, Hamlyn Heights, Victoria, Australia, 3215.

David Thompson: I am trying to trace my nephew David Thompson who is about 21 years old and has recently joined the navy. I have not seen him since he was about three years old. His former home address was Castle Street, Noram, Berwick upon Tweed. He has a sister called Donna. I have recently divorced and my ex wife has asked me to give him some items from his grandmother that his parents would not allow him to have as a child. If you know where David is, please contact Andrew Thompson at thompson.andrew.s@solarurbines.com or write to 1 Rue De La Rance, Erec, 22250, France.

St Vincent: Seeking John Endicott originally from Clyst, Honiton, Devon having lost touch with him when we left St Vincent Training Base. When we left in 1954, he gave me a wallet which I still have (no money in it). I left the Navy in 1965. Contact Roger Cluett-Kendall, 5 Tan Row, Tan Lane, Bourton, Gillingham, Dorset, SP8 5AR or tel: 01747 840951.

RNAS Dale, c.1944: Ex-Wren W/T Op Mavis Hollins (now Asplin) and living near Skegness. Does anyone remember me? I would love to hear from you. Contact me on 01507 463224.

Bob Warby, MTBs: Looking for information and or anyone who knew Bob Warby. From what we know he was a Leading Hand, Motor Mechanic on board HMTLC 321. Also want to find out what sort of address Mess 2, 'Pehin Pehin', RN Dockyard, Chatham was? If you can help please contact Colin Banks, 65 Donaldson Street, Mackay, Queensland, 4740, Australia.

HMS Vernon: Marika works for the Aspx Gallery at Gunwharf Quays, Portsmouth and is researching the history of HMS Vernon and in particular the Vulcan Building, in which the Aspx Gallery is situated. She would like to interview ex-forces people who were based at HMS Vernon and would appreciate any photographs that they could use. The research results will initially go on the gallery's website and hopefully, with some funding, will be an exhibition at the gallery by the end of the year. If you could help please contact Marika Bernard at marika.bernard@yahoo.co.uk or tel: 07824 665854.

Invincible-class carriers: Author producing a mainly photo book covering the history and development of Invincible class carriers requests help from former/serving crewmembers who have personal pics of the three ships at work, flight deck activity, on operations, on exercise with other navies (particularly USN) etc and would be willing to allow them to be used. Full credits given for pic source. Please contact Mark Healy at cognitivengineer@aol.com or tel: 01202 849006 or post to 329 Sopwith Crescent, Wimborne, Dorset, BH21 1XQ. All will be looked after and returned.

HMS Reaper, escort carrier: Charlie Proudfoot was an AB on board Reaper and is now in a home. I would like to get some pictures of the ship and the crew for him. I'm willing to pay postage to get copies, even

come and collect if you live in Scotland. Thanks in anticipation. Contact Albert Valler, 14 St Andrews Court, High Street, Burntisland, Fife, KY3 9AL or tel: 01592 870129.

HMS Ladybird (Sasebo, Japan 1950-53 Association): It is with great regret that in view of diminishing numbers and age related problems, it has been decided that HMS Ladybird (Sasebo Japan 1950-53 Association) will cease to hold any further reunions. However, the association will continue in name and any future contact should be made through the vice president, S/M Robin Tubbs at Robintubbs@talktalk.net or tel: 023 8089 7923.

Competition

Winners of a pair of tickets to Yeovilton Air Day on July 10 are:

Katherine Daniels, Chudleigh Knighton, Devon;
Simon Sims, Stourbridge, West Midlands;
Julie Hawkeswood, Somerton;
WO1 Andy Marshall, Plympton, Plymouth;
Chris Watson;
Mr L J Eldred, Prestwood, Gt. Missenden;
Mr M J Hughes, Conwy;
Mr C Jacobs, Southville, Bristol;
Mrs Pamela Phillips, Plympton, Devon;
Phillip J Goodbody, Titchfield Common, Hampshire.

Hotel, Gillingham, Kent from October 1 to 3. For more information contact Fred Kinsey at fred@hmssuperb.co.uk or tel: 01223 871505.

HMS Plymouth Association: This year's reunion will be held at the Royal Maritime Club, Portsmouth from October 1 to 3. Formal dinner on 1st, AGM/reunion on 2nd with DTS on 3rd. Contact the social secretary, Derek 'Tiger' Moth at d.moth@btinternet.com or tel 01908 663149 or the secretary, Martin Slater at sec126club@btinternet.com or tel 0151 286 6992 for further information.

Type 21 Club: The first official Type 21 Club reunion will take place in Devonport from October 8 to 10. Meet on October 8 at 1900 in St Levan's Inn, Inaugural T21 Association meeting at 1200 on October 9 at the Royal British Legion, Crownhill. The main reunion is also at the RBL Crownhill starting at 1930. The weekend is open to anyone who served on a 21 at anytime in their illustrious careers, take up so far is very high with 200+ anticipated. Contact Mark Brocklehurst at mark@sharplesgroup.com or see the http://type21club.ning.com

NOVEMBER 2010
HMS Broadsword (Type 22 Frigate): The bi-annual reunion will take place in Chester

Diary dates

JULY
Yeovilton Air Day: Saturday July 10: www.royalnavy.mod.uk/operations-and-support/establishments/naval-bases-and-air-stations/rnas-yeovilton/rnas-yeovilton-air-day-2009
Culdrose Air Day: Wednesday July 28: www.royalnavy.mod.uk/operations-and-support/establishments/naval-bases-and-air-stations/rnas-culdrose/rnas-culdrose-air-day-2009

Portsmouth Navy Days: Friday and Saturday July 30-31: www.navydaysuk.co.uk

AUGUST
Portsmouth Navy Days: Sunday August 1: www.navydaysuk.co.uk

Assignments

Cdre Thomas M Karsten to HQ British Forces Gibraltar as Commander British Forces from September 14.

Cdr Nick U S MacDonald-Robinson to HMS Bulwark as CO during upkeep from July 13.

Lt Peter H Vincent to HMS Smiler as CO from July 12.

Capt Steve Dainton to HMS Cumberland as CO from September 8.

Capt Jeremy Kyd to HMS Ark Royal as CO from September 14.

Surg Cdr Stuart M Collett as CO Med Group on Herick 14 from June 1.

from November 5 to 7. This reunion is the last for our president, Captain Canning (Rtd) as he is standing down as president. It will consist of all those wishing to make a weekend of it, meeting up on the Friday at the Pled Bull at 1930. The main reunion will take place on Saturday night with a formal dinner at the Crown Plaza Hotel in Chester at 1900, the AGM will be in Chester Town Hall at 1430 on the Saturday. All ranks and rates are welcome for further details contact Michael Roche at michaelroche1@btinternet.com or tel: 01752 811206.

Submarine Renown Association: 2010 reunion will take place in Leicester from November 19 to 21. Further details: email subrenown@ntlworld.com or tel: (0116) 2912195.

FEBRUARY 2011
RN Shipmates Association: Following yet another very successful RN Shipmate's reunion at Sandown this year, we have moved to the superb Shanklin Hotel (yes you will still get your 'Sea Time' in) here on the Isle of Wight. No ship's association? No RNA near you? Miss the camaraderie? Then 'swing the lamp' and have a tot at the RN Shipmates Reunion from February 4 to 7. Price includes car ferry fare, plenty of

Reunions

SOON
HMS Brington: Calling all ex crew members of HMS Brington in 1976. We are hoping to have a reunion of the crew members serving on board at the time of Prince Charles, in the summer of 2010, this is yet to have a proper date or venue at the moment. However is likely to be either London or Gloucester. Anyone interested that would like to get in touch with me Mike Sinker (ex Leading Cook) at either m.sinker@hotmail.co.uk or telephone me on 01395 516997.

JULY 2010
HMS Hood, Neptune and Kandahar: There will be a joint Hood Association and Neptune Association Service to re-dedicate both Hood and Neptune Memorials at the National Memorial Arboretum at Alrewas, Burton-on-Trent, Staffordshire on July 9 at noon. The Hood Memorial was erected in October 2008 in honour of the 1,415 men who lost their lives on May 24 1941. The Neptune Memorial was erected in July 2005 in honour of the 837 men who lost their lives on the two ships HMS Neptune and HMS Kandahar on December 19 1941. Relatives and friends are welcome. HMS Hood website at http://www.hmshood.com

and HMS Neptune website at http://www.hmsneptune.com

Wrens of HMS Seahawk, RNAS Culdrose: Reunion at the Culdrose Air Day on July 28. Wrens and men are invited. This is the 50th anniversary reunion since being stationed at HMS Seahawk, come and have fun on Air Day, meet up with old friends. Contact Beryl Dadds née Ogden on 01209 203935 or Jimmy Carr on 07884 314825.

AUGUST 2010
HMS Ceres (Wetherby 1946-58): The 8th reunion of HMS Ceres will be held from August 12 to 14 at the Crown Hotel, Harrogate, North Yorkshire. Anyone interested should contact Richard Knight at knight.ceres53@ntlworld.com or tel: 01937 581404.

SEPTEMBER 2010
British Pacific & East Indies Fleets 1941-45: Reunion from September 10 to 12 at the Britannia Hotel, Coventry. Fleet Air Arm veterans most welcome. Family and friends welcome. Three nights £130pp half board. This is excellent value. Contact John Grossett on 01943 600588 or Alf Lonsdale on 01293 432049.

HMS Comus: Reunion from September 17 to 19. Meet at the Maritime Club, Portsmouth

on Friday, AGM Saturday with evening Buffet Dinner and Dance in the Victory Club, HMS Nelson. For more information contact Bryan Cox at bryanvcx@hotmail.com or tel: 01903 232720.

HMS Invincible Communications Association (Falklands) '82: Annual reunion to be held in Leicester from September 24 to 26. For details contact Tim Jenkins at tjenkins@hwfire.org.uk or tel: 07753 766875 or see the website at http://www.freewebs.com/hica82 or Mick Kessell on 01293 552601.

Electronic Warfare (EW) Branch Reunion Dinner: The annual EW reunion will take place in the WO&SR's Mess HMS Collingwood on September 24 and costs £25. Open to all former and current serving EW Senior Rates. Further details from PO 'Deacs' Deacon at ajdeacon@aim.com or tel: 07867 897736.

OCTOBER 2010
HMS Crane U23/F123 (1943-62) Association: Reunion and AGM to be held at the Gateway Hotel, Nottingham from October 1 to 3. All details from Joe Smith at crane.bird@tiscali.co.uk or Tony Nuttall on 0115 9526363.

HMS Superb (Cruiser) Association: Reunion takes place at the King Charles

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NEW LIFESTYLE. NEW ADVENTURES. NEW ZEALAND. NAVY

to: The Royal Navy
Subject: New Life & New Adventures in New Zealand



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Attach

Kia Ora

A few years ago a friend of mine asked me the question "What sort of things do you want to achieve before you die"? I responded with what I assumed would be the type of things many of us might want to achieve: "I'd like to go on a safari, walk the Great Wall of China and dive the Great Barrier Reef". These seemed to be pretty ambitious but achievable goals in my book. However, he then asked me, "When do you have these planned in"? Well I replied "Currently I don't" to which he responded, "Well in which case I can guarantee they will simply never happen".

This rather took the wind out of my sails however; during a subsequent discussion with my wife I brought up the subject of our desire to achieve a better quality of life for our family, a more challenging career and to see more of the world. Following both conversations we decided to do something about it and planned our desires into our lives; and guess what? - They happened!

Eighteen months after making an initial enquiry to the RNZN we arrived lock, stock and barrel in New Zealand to begin a new life and a new career. The help and assistance we received from the recruiting staff in order to make the transition from UK to NZ and RN to RNZN was first class and logistically made things extremely easy. How does it look ten months down the line? Wonderful! We have without doubt the quality of life we wished for for so long in the UK. Our two children absolutely love school here and we have seen them flourish in a safe family environment. The climate (it's hot and sunny - a lot!) allows them to get involved in so many different activities, especially sports which they could only have dreamt about in the UK.

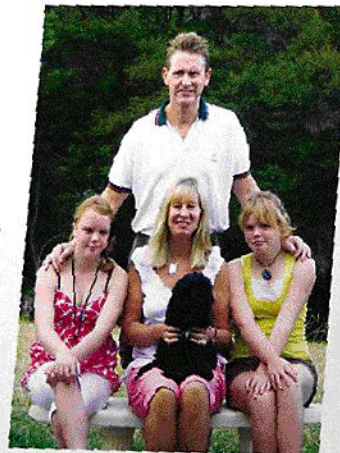
The RNZN is obviously smaller than the RN but nevertheless just as professional and I find working for an organisation which aims to be the best small nation navy in the world as both challenging and rewarding. I spent six months at sea in HMNZS Te Mana (an ANZAC Class frigate) where I was very quickly acquainted with the way the RNZN conducts its business and visited Brisbane, Darwin, Singapore, Fremantle and Melbourne along the way! I am now the Operations Training officer at the Maritime Warfare Training Centre in HMNZS Philomel, the naval base in Auckland.

Domestically we now live in a great house with six acres of land which allows us to keep a dog and horses for the children. We have a plethora of countryside, coastline and scenery on our doorstep which quite simply takes our breath away. You really can swim in the sea in the morning and ski in the mountains in the afternoon!

Does any of this sound as attractive to you? Go on, plan it!

Martin Doolan

LT CDR, RNZN



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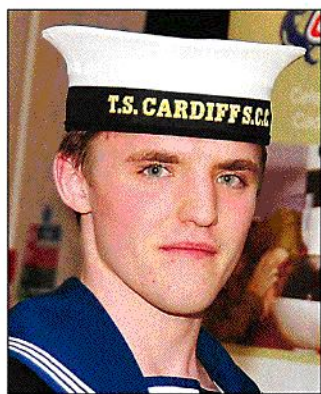
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● LC Gareth Griffiths

TS Cardiff doubles up

CARDIFF unit had twice the reason to celebrate when it came to deciding on Lord Lieutenant's Cadets.

At the Lord Lieutenant's Awards ceremony in South Wales, LC Matthew Keen took over the baton from LC Rebecca Callan.

And in the Gwent version of events, the coveted title was awarded to LC Gareth Griffiths.

Dinner date for former CO

NEWHAVEN and Seaford unit staged a mess dinner at Seaford Golf Club to honour their former Commanding Officer, Lt (SCC) Neil Rogers RNR.

Lt Rogers commanded the unit for eight years before ill health forced him to retire and hand over the reins to S/Lt (SCC) Steve Townsend RNR.

Officers and staff attended the dinner and saw another former CO and unit vice president Lt Cdr John Owen present Lt Rogers with an outdoor clock and barometer to thank him for his dedicated service to TS Defiance.

Lt Rogers's wife S/Lt (SCC) Carol Rogers RNR is the unit's First Lieutenant



● Portland unit's band plays to 700 departing tourists on board German cruise ship Albatros in the harbour, a Naval dockyard for 150 years before it was sold in 1996. Cruise passenger numbers this year are expected to top 10,000 compared to 2,000 in 2009

Port aids TS Penn

PORTLAND unit has been given an equipment and training grant worth more than £16,000 by the local harbour authority.

The Dorset port is to give the unit £4,250 to buy two boats – a state-of-the-art pulling boat and a safety RIB plus trailer – as well as a five-year £2,500 annual bursary for maritime training.

The bursary will enable a total of 50 cadets to undertake nautical training.

Part of the donated funds will also provide essential equipment allowing cadets to participate in the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme.

Steve Davies, chief executive of the Portland Harbour Authority, said: "Portland Sea Cadets

Scouts celebrate completion of hut roof

THE 3rd Gosport Sea Scouts celebrated the completion of a new roof for the main scout hut with an evening of fun and games and a barbecue.

VIP guest was Cdre Mark Slawson, the Commanding Officer of HMS Sultan who, ably assisted by a group of excited youngsters, cut the ceremonial ribbon.

The development became necessary when the old roof fell into a poor state of repair, and the Scouts enthusiastically set about raising funds to renew it.

Having almost reached their target the group approached HMS Sultan for assistance and a

contribution of £3,890 was made, which meant the work could start.

The money was donated from the HMS Sultan Summer Show, an annual event that raises money for local and Service charities.

Cdre Slawson said: "I am delighted the HMS Sultan Show was able to help this fine cause, and it is heartening to see so many young people enjoying themselves whilst doing something constructive."

"Great credit must go to the helpers and supervisors who give a lot of their time and without whom the group would not exist."



● Cdre Mark Slawson cuts the ribbon at the Gosport Sea Scout hut

New image 'will help raise Corps profile'



while supporting its future.

"By creating three new identities for each of the arms of the business, the Marine Society & Sea Cadets believes it can champion that cause far more effectively."

The umbrella organisation now becomes MSSC, to reflect its

parental role in governing the two charities.

The Marine Society moves to a dynamic representation that reflects its valued status as a provider of educational opportunities and professional seafarer support to those in all of the sea services.

And the Sea Cadets has received a modern and vibrant look with the purpose of appealing to new volunteers and young people and in keeping with its commitment to support young people via a range of nautical adventure activities.

The charity worked with London-based design agency SEA Design to develop the three looks, and conducted a staff survey into attitudes about the organisation to get a feel for the direction in which to go.

The charity believes these new looks are a step towards establishing itself more firmly and raising its profile to continue to support professional seafarers and Britain's youth as Sea Cadets.

Newport seeks boat gear

NEWPORT unit is seeking help in returning a dinghy to the water.

The unit owns a Heron sailing boat, which was stored over the winter.

The hull was inside the main building but the mast, sails and rudder were in a storage unit, which was destroyed when vandals set it alight.

Officer in Charge CPO (SCC) Jeffrey Bowen said: "We are now left with a perfectly good hull but nothing else because the Heron is no longer being built and we have been unable to obtain those parts that were destroyed."

"It may be possible that there are other damaged Heron boats around that could be salvaged for our missing spare parts."

"Alternatively, Navy News readers may know of some place where spare parts are still available."

"It seems a great pity to dispose of a serviceable hull that could be of use to either ourselves or another sailing enthusiast."

Contact CPO Bowen at beerscold@ntlworld.com



● Capt Mark Windsor, Captain Sea Cadets (left) and Rear Admiral Martin Alabaster, FOSNNI, with members of Weston-super-Mare unit and the much-coveted Canada Trophy

Best Weston

THE annual Weston-super-Mare unit Presentation Evening saw plenty of prizes handed out – but the most desirable of all was the result of a collective effort.

There were two VIP guests – Rear Admiral Martin Alabaster, Flag Officer Scotland, Northern England and Northern Ireland, and Capt Mark Windsor, Captain Sea Cadets – and both inspected more than 80 cadets in front of staff, parents and other guests.

The senior officer presented the awards for achievement; CPO

(SCC) Adrian Main received a Cadet Forces Medal and 40 Canada Trophy medals were distributed to staff and committee members.

Then came the highlight of the night – the award of the Canada Trophy, marking out TS Weston as the best unit in the country.

The evening also saw the return of a familiar face – former POC, now ET, George Davis travelled from HMS Collingwood to pick up his BTEC Certificate for Public Services and Music which arrived after he left to join the RN.



Gunwharf showcase

SOUTHERN Area cadets gathered at Gunwharf Quays in Portsmouth to make their contribution to the Cadet 150 anniversary this year.

The start of the weekend – which showcased Sea Cadet talents, though Cadet 150 covers all three Armed Forces plus the

● Cadets from Poole and Parkstone units form an armed guard drill display team. The squad, trained by CPO (SCC) Stephen West (Poole) and assisted by PO (SCC) Burton (Parkstone), used SA80 rifles to put on a display without orders to the song Eye of the Tiger

Staff ride will span Britain

OFFICE staff in Southern Area are to undertake a charity cycle relay from Land's End to John o'Groats at the end of this month.

All personnel at the office in HMS Nelson, Portsmouth, plan to take part – eight men and two women, all over the age of 40, and each cycling around 125 miles in around three weeks.

The group also hope that Corps adult volunteers from the areas visited during the ride will accompany members of the official relay team for sections of the course.

To cut overheads, all cyclists and the back-up team will be accommodated where possible at Sea Cadet units en route on a dinner bed and breakfast basis – though most overnight stays are likely to be austere, using camp beds and sleeping bags.

The eight taking part are Cdr Andy Giles RN, Maj Andy Henderson RM Retd, Martin McCluskey, Janette Bartlett, John Hall, James Stewart, Ann Shirley and Ronald Cheek.

All money raised – and more than £1,300 has been pledged so far – will be used to allow partial or full funding for a disadvantaged or disabled Sea Cadet from Southern Area to either spend a week on an offshore voyage on one of the MSSC's training ships, or attend a one-week Outward Bound training course in Snowdonia.

The relay will take place between July 22 and August 11, and a Just Giving website has been set up at www.justgiving.com/SASeaCadetsLEJOG

Beccles' Jimmy is rewarded

AN officer at Beccles unit has been rewarded for her involvement in Sea Cadet matters which started when she was five – though she was never a cadet herself.

S/Lt (SCC) Sharon Meadows RNR was born and bred in Lowestoft, where she still lives, and works at the local college as a facilitator for adult learning.

Her involvement with TS Brave started when her father was an instructor – and he is now the unit president.

A qualified Sea Cadet and RYA First Aid Instructor, Sharon held a Writer/Stories Instructor qualification as well, though that is now redundant; the officer also holds a RYA Level 2 Power accreditation.

Sharon is the First Lieutenant at TS Brave, as well as Administration Officer – an ideal situation as she has turned her hand to several jobs at the unit, including Divisional Officer, Stores Officer and Officer in Charge.

She is also the District Staff Officer for First Aid.

Sharon, who attended the recently-closed SCTC Inskip for her National Officer Selection Board in October last year, has been presented with the Certificate of Meritorious Service to Sea Cadets by the Lord Lieutenant of Suffolk, Lord Tollemache.

CCF – was marked with the firing of a cannon.

And then it was a non-stop programme of displays and ceremonies.

In the Gunwharf complex itself – once HMS Vernon, home of the Royal Navy's torpedo and mine warfare specialists – were displays of club-swinging and the hornpipe as well as performances by a Sea Cadet band.

On the water there were pulling and powerboating demonstrations, while the Corps' sail training vessel TS Royalist was also present for the event.

Link with home is reforged

A CHARITY link between a Scottish unit and a care home has been revived thanks to the efforts of a member of staff.

Alan Duff, the Officer in Charge of Methil and District unit, and his partner Andrea McRoberts took part in the Scottish Two Day Marches to raise funds for Erskine Home in Edinburgh, a nursing home for ex-Servicemen and women.

Based at Garelochhead training camp near Helensburgh, the Scottish Marches are a qualifying event for the British military contingent aiming to take part in the Nijmegen Marches in the Netherlands.

It involves an 80km road march covering harsh terrain.

Alan and Andrea presented a cheque for £654 to Erskine Home fundraising manager John Fyfe – and the marchers said they hoped that the event would help rekindle the relationship between the two charitable organisations which had fallen away in recent years.

Chatham celebration

THE spotlight may have moved on, but Chatham is not bowing out.

The Historic Dockyard on the Medway was centre stage this time last year, hosting the first Armed Forces Day national event.

This year that honour goes to Cardiff, but Chatham is still welcoming members of the Armed Forces and veterans to the yard.

And the event, due to be staged as *Navy News* went to press, will also feature major participation by Sea Cadets, Air Cadets, members of the Army Cadet Force and CCF contingents, as Chatham marks the Cadet 150 anniversary – including an inter-cadet field gun competition.

● Cadets demonstrate the new climbing wall at TS Duke of York in Weymouth



Big day for grand new Duke of York

CADETS from across the UK may be looking forward to using the new training centre at Weymouth, but they will also get a chance to look back as well.

The new centre, TS Duke of York, represents a major facility in the borough of Weymouth and Portland, which will host Olympic and Paralympic sailing events in 2012.

But woven into the fabric of the state-of-the-art complex is a historic strand.

Although the centre will mainly offer sea training, there is also

a sports hall with an impressive climbing wall.

Called the Willis Hall, it is named after a sailor who served in HMS Poppy, and who was later a member of the Flower-class Corvette Association.

Annie Seymour, Association treasurer and daughter of founder member Cyril Stephens, said the £45,000 legacy from Mrs Willis helped with both the sports hall and the cadets' lounge, known as the Convoy Room because of the corvettes' wartime role.

For the official opening ceremony around 50 local cadets met guest of honour Admiral Sir Jonathon Band, the former First Sea Lord, who unveiled a plaque and watched a club-swinging display by Dartmouth unit and a performance by the Portland and Weymouth Corps of Drums.

Admiral Band said it was a great honour to officiate at the opening of the "fantastic facility."

Among the other VIP guests were Valerie Pitt-Rivers, the Lord Lieutenant of Dorset, and Cllr Paul Kimber, Mayor of Weymouth.

A letter from the Duke of York, the Admiral of the Sea Cadet Corps, recalled that he spent a good part of his Naval career

"across the bay" in Portland, and noted that the Corps was a very important part of youth development in the country.

Southern Area Navy Board cadet POC Paul Huggett (standing in for his South Western Area colleague) was also there, performing his duties diligently despite the fact the Hastings cadet had a maths A-level the following day.

Two members of the Submariners Association London branch, Ian Tyson and Bob Nunn, were also there to present a plaque from the wall of HMS Dolphin; the men had been impressed by the Corps when London cadets were brought in to help run a centenary remembrance service at Westminster Abbey in 2001.

Sea Cadets have trained in Weymouth for 30 years in the Nothe, but TS Duke of York – led by CO Lt Cdr (SCC) Dave Bradford RNR – will welcome Army, Air and CCF cadets as well.

It can accommodate 62 cadets plus 18 volunteers, and features a main deck, the Taranto indoor shooting range, classrooms, a dining room, galley, a ward room with spectacular views, a cadet mess and offices.

Cadet training at Weymouth

will focus on developing the skills required to handle anything from a single-handed sailing craft to a high performance mono-hull, while for adults the emphasis is on powerboat and safety boat handling.

Courses in navigation, marine engineering, shooting and cook stewarding will also be offered, and over the next 25 years the centre expects to welcome some 280,000 cadets and 90,000 volunteers.

The new centre also offers facilities to Weymouth unit TS Boscawen (whose members helped ensure the opening ceremony ran smoothly) and an Air Cadet unit.

The new building is funded by Defence Estates, the Royal Navy, MSSC, trusts and foundations and individual members.

Captain Sea Cadets Capt Mark Windsor said: "This is a very proud and important day for the Sea Cadet Corps, and a huge milestone in delivering this new, state-of-the-art facility for Sea Cadets and other forces as well."

"I think it signposts the way to the future for the cadet movement, and hopefully many thousands of cadets will enjoy the opportunities afforded by this facility well into the future."

Whitehaven detachment maintains standards

THE fledgling Royal Marines Cadet detachment of Whitehaven unit has again proved itself up there with the best in only its second field assessment weekend.

The section of eight Royal Marines Cadets achieved an overall rating of 'good' – and it was so nearly even better.

Sgt (SCC) Simon Gray, Whitehaven's Royal Marines Cadet Detachment Commander, said: "The team scored 60 points overall."

"One more point would have given them a 'very good' assessment, and they were only two points short of being the best performing detachment during the weekend."

Whitehaven unit's Commanding Officer Lt (SCC) Peter Lucas RNR added that even though the team had not won they had been singled out for praise as being "head and shoulders above the rest" in most aspects of the assessment.

"I am extremely proud of all those who took part," said Lt Lucas.

"This was only the second assessment in which our cadets have taken part and was a terrific achievement for them."

"It also reflects well on the quality of training delivered by our detachment staff."

Last-minute visit proves big success

EIGHT pupils from the CCF (RN) section at the Duke of York's Royal Military School got the chance to visit HMS Monmouth when the frigate visited Dover.

Although all from military families, none of the pupils' parents were in the Navy, so this was a chance to see what the Senior Service is all about.

The visit was arranged in less than two hours – Monmouth was spotted by an eagle-eyed member of staff that evening as she sailed into the Channel port.

But despite the lack of time, a commendable effort by the frigate's officers meant the cadets were soon learning about life on board, touring the bridge, the ship control centre, the ops room and the hangar in the process.

Highlights were perhaps not surprisingly the guns and missiles for'ard and the tour of the Merlin helicopter aft.

Two hours after the cadets went shoreside the Black Duke was off again, helping escort the 'Little Ships' across the Channel from Ramsgate to Dunkirk in the Operation Dynamo 70th anniversary commemorations.

For a report on the commemorations see p11



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● Stonehaven's junior section crew, who took part in a fun race at the Grampian District regatta – front to rear, Rosie Hall, Danny Caine, Emily Martin and Kirsty Lawson

A half-ton of pride

HONOURS were shared between local rivals Peterhead and Stonehaven at the Grampian District regatta.

Hosts Peterhead proved their girls had the edge in both age categories, taking the Open and Junior pulling titles.

But Stonehaven managed the same feat in the boys' pulling competition.

And when it came to boat handling, the visitors were on top of the oars, but Peterhead reigned supreme in the power section.

The two units then combined to ensure that Grampian District would once again be prominent at the ExCeL Centre in London's Docklands – and it will be the 50th year in succession that Stonehaven has represented the North.

Both Stonehaven boys' pulling teams progressed smoothly to the London showdown in the first week of September, where they will defend their national titles alongside their boat handling compatriots and colleagues from

Peterhead, Greenock, Newburn and Chester-le-Street.

The successful Stonehaven crew coxswains were LC Michael Smith, LC Michael Blacklaw and OC Liam Parker.



● Loughborough cadets with their trophies after the District pulling regatta at Northampton. The boys' team won gold in the Open category, and will this month compete at the Eastern Area regatta. The unit's juniors also won, but the girls lost narrowly to Northampton

EAST Anglian cadet forces combined with the Cambridgeshire Regiment Old Comrades Association for their annual commemorative service.

It ensured a special day for both veterans and their youthful comrades drawn from units across the county.



And the relevance of the event, part of the Cadet 150 programme, was reinforced by the fact that the founder of the Army Cadet Force 150 years ago was Octavia Hill, from Wisbech in Cambridgeshire.

A commemorative service taken by the Bishop of Huntingdon took place in Ely Cathedral, during which a specially-made casket containing the remnants of previous Regimental Colours was brought to the altar on behalf of the OCA by POC Lily Freeman of Cambridge unit, the Lord Lieutenant of Cambridgeshire's Cadet.

The Colours had previously been laid up in the cathedral but had become too fragile for normal display.

The service itself was designed for both the veterans and cadets.

After the service a parade was staged, with the salute being taken by the Lord Lieutenant of Cambridgeshire, Col Hugh Duberly, accompanied by Maj

Gen John Sutherell (Rtd) and a plethora of mayors and other VIPs from across Cambridgeshire.

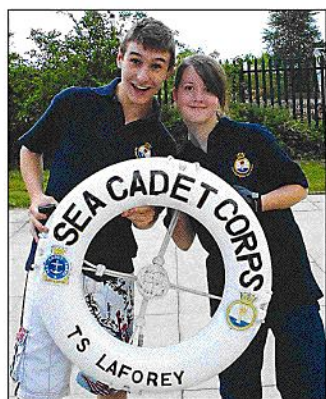
Cdr Stuart Watt RN, Deputy Area Officer East, attended the event and was accompanied throughout by Eastern Area Navy Board Cadet, POC Stefan LeRoux, also from Cambridge unit.

Stefan is becoming something of an old hand at this sort of high-profile event – he was one of seven Sea Cadets who met the Queen in February at the start of the Cadet 150 calendar.

Static displays were provided in the cathedral grounds by all the cadet forces, the Sea Cadets being represented by Mildenhall unit – technically an interloper, being in Suffolk, but actually the closest unit to Ely.

The Sea Cadet platoon from two different districts comprised cadets from Cambridge, Wisbech, Mildenhall and Peterborough and was led by Lt (SCC) Amanda O'Donoghue RNR, the CO at Cambridge.

The predicted rain fortunately held off, but low cloud prevented a planned flypast over the cathedral by the Historic Battle of Britain Flight.



● TS Laforey's winning Yole team

Spreading the message on sailing

THE FOCUS has been very much on the water in recent weeks at Northampton and Wellingborough unit.

In a joint effort with the RYA, cadets and instructors worked with Standens Barn School to introduce pupils to sailing.

The eight youngsters were the first to learn to sail as part of the RYA's OnBoard grass roots sailing programme, which launched in Northamptonshire in May.

Each pupil completed a four-week learn-to-sail course, earning a Stage 1 dinghy sailing certificate.

TS Laforey also took a prominent role in supporting the Northampton Branch of the Inland Waterways Association with their annual narrow boat rally in Becketts Park, Northampton.

The event was attended by more than 50 boats, and cadets put on a show of their waterborne skills and helped the narrow boats on the Bank Holiday Monday up through the 17 locks between Northampton and the Grand Union Canal five miles away at Gayton.

The unit also hosted the Northamptonshire and Leicestershire rowing regatta, and three Laforey teams won through to the regional competition, which is to be held in Nottingham this month.



Fun for all at Warsash

AWARDS evenings are a great opportunity for cadets to show their skills off to parents and friends, as well as reaping the rewards for all their hard work.

So Warsash unit thought they would take the idea one step further and combine it with an open day, catching the early summer weather and making a day of it.

The Commanding Officer of TS Tormentor, Lt Cdr (SCC) Victoria Marson RNR, also saw it as an opportunity for the families to learn as well.

Having just celebrated its third birthday, the unit grew fast from scratch, and now has 50 cadets on its books, along with 20 adult volunteers.

Indeed, the unit is bursting at the seams – it is based at and supported by the Warsash Maritime Academy but has grown to fill its accommodation, so has a waiting list as it cannot recruit any more youngsters at present.

Back to the open day, which

started at 1000 with a parade and inspection, then it was straight into displays and demonstrations.

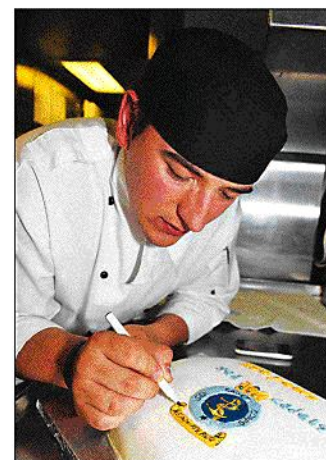
That included hornpipes and club-swinging, as well as signalling with flags, and plenty of sheepish-looking relatives were enticed into the performances.

The Mayor of Fareham, Cllr Brian Bayford, also threw himself into the day, dancing and signalling away, and the Associate Director (Business Operations) at the academy, Capt Andy Hair, also attended.

At midday there was a break for the serious business of the unit annual general meeting, allowing parents a chance to see how the unit runs, but with the barbecues lit for a 1230 start it was quickly back to the serious fun.

There were short sailing boat trips round the harbour, manned by the cadets themselves, displays of fancy ropework and first aid demonstrations.

A raffle helped raise funds for Duke of Edinburgh expeditions, and the day ended with the presentation of awards.



● Chef Craig Cannell puts the finishing touches to the cake

Picture: LA(Phot) Jay Allen

Birthday cake from Severn

WITH the UK cadet movement celebrating its 150th anniversary this year, a birthday cake of some kind would seem to be in order.

And fishery protection vessel HMS Severn did the honours during her recent visit to Newport.

While the ship was in South Wales cadets from the Newport unit TS Resolute were invited on board and enjoyed a busy day in the sunshine.

The youngsters were given tours of the ship and an insight into the Royal Navy and life in the Fishery Protection squadron.

To celebrate Cadet 150, Leading Chef Mickey Dewing and Chef Craig Cannell presented a beautifully-decorated cake to the unit – and judging by the empty plates it was extremely tasty.

Some of the cadets were lucky enough to rejoin the ship days later when they went on passage from Newport to Swansea.

The day started early, in order to catch the falling tide, but once clear of the River Usk, the cadets found themselves fighting a (practice) fire, keeping watch, navigating and rescuing Ruth, the man-overboard dummy who had (true to form) clumsily fallen overboard...

There was also a chance to ride in the ship's sea boats.

Huyton their awareness

CADETS from Huyton got their daily orders and joined their affiliated ship HMS Iron Duke on a passage from Scotland to Hull.

Half a dozen cadets took the chance to get some work experience aboard the frigate, finding out about the tasks of engineers, communicators, warfare specialists, caterers and others.

They prepared meals for the whole ship's company, and after hard days navigating and watchkeeping they learned the benefit of chilling out in their mess decks.



Becoming the unseen

YOUNGSTERS from CCF contingents across the country converged on HMS Raleigh for three days of military training, hosted by the National Sea Cadet Training Centre.

The dozen trainees, from as far afield as Lancaster and Bournemouth, took part in a course aimed at giving them an opportunity to live in a naval base and experience life as a sailor or Royal.

Highlights included a commando-led brief on camouflage and concealment, observational skills and movement, both with and without a rifle.

The cadets were able to get some hands-on experience of concealing themselves with the camouflage cream, then tracked each other across the training area.

They were also briefed on the role of a ship's protection force and were given a chance to put what they had been taught into practice on MV Cossack, a purpose-built mock-up of a merchant vessel at the Torpoint training establishment used to prepare sailors to board and search ships suspected of carrying an illegal cargo.

The cadets competed against each other to complete the exercise in the fastest time.

The final day saw the cadets learning how to survive in the field, preparing and eating their 24-hour ration packs.

● Twins Jake and Annie Rogan, from Ellesmere School CCF get stuck into their ration packs at HMS Raleigh

Picture: Dave Sherfield

Air Cadet band salutes Ark Royal

THE National Marching Band of the Air Training Corps sent the Fleet flagship on her way out of Portsmouth thanks to a happy piece of timing.

The band was at Fort Blockhouse to practise for high-profile Cadet 150 events in London, and the standard of their work so impressed instructors – including Callum Gordon of the Royal Marines – that they contacted HMS Ark Royal to say the band would form up outside the ward room to play as the ship left harbour.

As the carrier passed through the mouth of the harbour, her sailors lining the deck, her Commanding Officer, Capt John Clink, could be seen on the bridge, acknowledging the gesture by the band.

The young musicians then rounded off their musical salute to the ship with a rousing three cheers before returning to their practice.



● The Princes Trust crew in action at the Junior Leaders Field Gun competition at HMS Collingwood

Network Rail team on the right track

WITH the senior field gunners resting up and nursing their bruises, it was the turn of the youngsters to take to the parade ground and show their skills at the annual Junior Leaders Field Gun Challenge at HMS Collingwood.

Now into its third year, the competition is very similar to the RN Field Gun event, in which 17 crews compete, but aimed predominantly at youths aged 18-25 who have either recently joined the Forces or have just begun apprenticeships with major commercial organisations.

This year, in addition to the Forces crews, teams represented Network Rail – who are also the event sponsors – BAE Systems, the Princes Trust and Derby University, amongst others.

Teams trained for just one week,

at the end of which they ran-off against the clock.

And the honours went to one of the sponsors' teams – Network Rail B, with a time of 1m 21.38s.

Second were RAF Cosford, in 1m 22.03s, just ahead of BAE Systems (1m 23.62s), RAF Halton 1m 24.56s), Network Rail A (1m 29.82s) and the Sea Cadets (1m 46.29s) in sixth – the only Senior Service representatives in the final.

The competition is the only one open specifically for new recruits and youth.

Guest of Honour was Second Sea Lord Vice Admiral Sir Alan Massey, who said: "This has been a tough and very demanding week for you all, displaying unparalleled effort – well done to everybody."



● Wrecked Allied shipping at Åndalsnes in the wake of the abortive attempt to liberate Trondheim

Definitive Norway story concluded

WHILE we bask in the reflected glory of the 70th anniversary of the Dunkirk evacuation and the Battle of Britain, we rather shove under the carpet the fiasco that is the Norwegian campaign.

To be sure, there's the naval victory in the first and second battles of Narvik.

But pretty much everything else the Allies did in Norway in April, May and June 1940 was one big lash-up.

Geirr Haarr closed his outstanding first volume on the history of the two-month battle for Norway with the triumph of Warspite and the destroyers in Ofot and Rombak fjords.

The destruction of the German destroyer force was the high point for the Allies. The remainder of the campaign, charted by Haarr in *The Battle for Norway: April-June 1940* (Seaforth, £30 ISBN 978-184832-0574), was largely a litany of setbacks.

As with the first volume (*The German Invasion of Norway*) this is principally a naval story, for, believes the author, it is a campaign "won and lost at sea" – won by an inferior navy, lost by a superior one.

Once again, the research is astounding – German, French, Norwegian and British sources (published and unpublished/official and unofficial) have been trawled, as have private and public photo libraries; there are hundreds of images reproduced here.

The author maintains the even-handed tone which made the first book such a fair and accurate affair.

In the days after the initial German invasion of Norway, the Allies sought to dislodge the invader. They succeeded in Narvik (but subsequently withdrew as the overall situation in Norway and France worsened). They failed abysmally at Trondheim.

Allied troops were landed at Åndalsnes and Namsos with the aim of trapping the Germans at Trondheim in a pincer. Instead, both ports were repeatedly bombed and the Allied forces hounded by the Luftwaffe.

There was British air power in Norway – carriers HMS Ark Royal and Glorious had been dispatched to support the ground forces – but the Fleet Air Arm was almost always second best to the Luftwaffe.

All three Navy fighters of the day – the Sea Gladiator, Blackburn Roc and Skua – were outclassed by enemy bombers. After his Gladiators were mauled over Norway, 804 NAS Commanding Officer Lt Cdr J C Cockburn told the Admiralty that the Fleet Air Arm's shortcomings could be solved in an instant: give it Spitfires.

As she had done for most of the early months of the war, HMS Ark Royal came under attack... and survived. Not so Glorious, whose sinking is perhaps the most controversial episode of the naval campaign.

Her captain, former submariner Guy D'Oyly-Hughes, remains the principal villain. His prickly nature and poor appreciation of carrier warfare were compounded by a desire to reach Scapa Flow as quickly as possible... so his Commander (Air) could be court-martialed.

That meant Glorious sailed hastily for Britain with an inadequate escort (two destroyers Acasta and Ardent). Worse, D'Oyly-Hughes didn't even bother to keep aircraft aloft to scout for danger.

And so on the afternoon of June 8, she was pounced upon by the battle-cruisers Scharnhorst and Gneisenau, who sank the three ships in under two hours.

For a good decade, there have been suggestions that the carrier and her escorts were sacrificed to allow the Norwegian Royal Family to safely reach Britain aboard HMS Devonshire.

Haarr is in little doubt that the cruiser picked up reports about Glorious being attacked – or that the senior officer aboard, Vice Admiral Sir John Cunningham, wrestled with his conscience.

Cunningham was under strict orders not to jeopardise his ship and its 450 passengers – not just Norwegian royalty but also the country's government and Allied political and military figures.

And he did not. He continued west. It is a decision which may seem cold – and it was a decision which Cunningham evidently hated according to the Norwegian liaison officer aboard Devonshire at the time – but there is every chance the cruiser would have followed Glorious and her escorts to a watery grave.

Devonshire's decision not to intervene also condemned upwards of 900 men to their deaths. Survivors reckon three out of five of the 1,500 men aboard made it into life rafts, but died in the subsequent hours and days. Just 45 men were rescued.

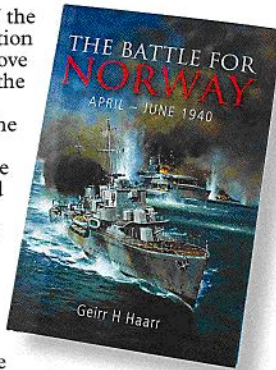
All in all, the Glorious affair is, well, less than glorious. The bravery of the Ardent and Acasta crews – the latter especially, who scored a torpedo hit which severely damaged Scharnhorst – was all-but snubbed by the Admiralty who denied both COs the VC, but did grant posthumous mentions in despatches.

But what might surprise English-speaking readers is that the German Admiralty – the *Oberkommando der Kriegsmarine* – was also far from happy with the Glorious affair.

It had given the Fleet Commander, Wilhelm Marschall, nebulous instructions and little intelligence, other than to attack Allied shipping at Harstad.

Marschall never got there (he wouldn't have found any shipping had he done so...). With the Scharnhorst damaged, he made for Trondheim and was promptly sacked for attacking – and sinking – an enemy capital ship rather than sticking to fixed and outdated orders from Berlin.

The fleet Marschall had once commanded "never again posed a decisive threat to the Allies" – the abiding outcome of the Norwegian campaign.



Landing room only

WORLD War 2 was a triumph of a maritime strategy that, after a faltering start in Norway and evacuation operations from France, Greece and Crete, progressed through amphibious raids of differing levels of success to the fully-fledged large-scale landings on the coasts of North Africa and Italy and, finally, of France.

In all these activities the basic platforms for landing infantry were the small assault landing craft, designated ALC to early 1942 and LCA thereafter, writes Prof Eric Grove of the University of Salford.

The story of these craft has now been excellently retold in *Assault Landing Craft: Design, Construction and Operations* (Seaforth, £19.95 ISBN 978-1-84832-0505) by Brian Lavery, the distinguished maritime historian who made his reputation in his study of the Nelsonian ship of line and has enhanced it by his recent increasingly-prolific work on the Navy of WW2.

He traces the development of the LCA from its conception by the Inter-Service Training and Development Centre set up in 1938. Two prototypes were rapidly produced in 1939, one by the lifeboat manufacturer Fleming and the other by Thornycroft, the major shipbuilder. It was decided to put the latter's craft into production as it would be easier to add necessary armour; 18 were on order by September 1939. It was produced throughout the war to the same basic design and remained in service in the post-war Navy, being used in the Suez landings in 1956.

The LCA was made of wood, built with a 'V' shaped chine hull and a bow door. The twin screws, recessed in the stern, were powered individually by Scripps V-8 petrol engines, versions of a Ford car engine. As mass production gathered pace, non-marine factories were brought into the LCA programme, notably the Lebus furniture factory which could launch its craft directly into the River Lea in North London.

Almost 2,000 basic LCAs were built, plus related variants used for fire-support duties. The author calculates that they might have landed as many as half a million troops of various nationalities. They were carried on board Landing Ship, Infantry, converted merchantmen of various shapes and sizes operated

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by both Royal and Merchant Navy crews. More than 50 such LSI were commissioned and most (45) were present at the Normandy landings in June 1944 where they landed American forces as well as British and Canadian.

The first four ALCs went into action carrying French Foreign Legionnaires at Bjerkvik – the first Allied landing of the war – and then in the brief capture of Narvik. Given the significance of these separate operations it is a pity that they are conflated into one in the author's brief accounts of his subject's combat debut.

As the first craft were being used offensively, seven others were being pressed into service to help evacuate the Allied forces from Dunkirk. In a reversal of their designed function they carried troops out to the larger ships assembled off shore although three brought troops back all the way on their return. Two were lost on the beaches, one was sunk by bombing next to a destroyer and one was towed back when its engines gave out.

The next attempt to use ALCs was in the abortive Operation Menace at Dakar which failed partly through shortage of landing craft.

1941 and 1942 saw a mixed bag of operations, some more successful than others as well as Assault Landing Craft playing key roles in the evacuations from Greece and Crete. There then followed the large-scale amphibious landings.

Lavery is very interesting in his account of these, pointing out that considerable difficulties had to be overcome in operations that rarely went according to plan and were closer-run things than they have seemed in retrospect. The achievement of the LCAs on June 6 in landing through obstacles which had not been cleared as expected was a key factor in the success of the operation, although serious delays could not be avoided. As the author laconically puts it "it would take longer to defeat Germany than planned".

As is to be expected from his important work on personnel and training in this period, the author pays full attention to the

training of the LCA crews.

Four men were needed per craft and, as numbers increased, many 'Hostilities Only' men were drafted into Combined Operations to man them.

It took time to set up an effective system and, for a time, Army personnel lost confidence in the ill-trained crews but by late 1942 an effective system was in place: two weeks' initial training at the former holiday camps that formed HMS Northney on Hayling Island, followed by six weeks of advanced training at the evacuated Royal Naval College at Dartmouth or HMS Helder at Brightlingsea. Only then were the newly-formed LCA flotillas ready to be passed north for operational training at Inveraray.

Flotillas were normally of 12 craft: four groups of three; they were commanded by RNVR lieutenants with a sub-lieutenant in charge of each group and an engineer sub-lieutenant running a six-man maintenance section.

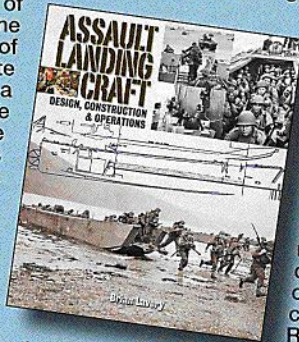
In September 1943 policy changed and it was decided to man minor landing craft with personnel from the existing Royal Marines Division; its men were in comparatively-less demand for their traditional big ship duties.

A new training complex was created in Wales and by the time of the Normandy landings two thirds of the LCA crews were Royal Marines. This was an important dimension of the transition of the Corps into an amphibious force.

This fascinating and multi-dimensional story is well told in a short (128 pages) but well-illustrated and enthralling book. The way in which the craft were operated are fully described in a highly seamanlike way.

As mentioned above, there are one or two errors of context here and there, but these do not diminish either the book's interest or utility.

One strength of the work is its critical nature; the author is not afraid to give the story 'warts and all.' The weaknesses of the 'Hedgehog' mine clearance spigot mortars are clearly described as is the initial failure of the Landing Craft Obstacle Clearance Units. I am sure there will be few who do not learn something from this comprehensive and well-written survey.



Don's life of changes

DON Murdoch joined the RN as an electrical artificer apprentice in the summer of 1944. Four years later he left Figgard and subsequently served in eight ships, numerous shore establishments, finally leaving the Service as Mrs Thatcher took office in No.10.

And throughout that time, it seems he had a smile permanently on his face – certainly from the numerous images reproduced in *Don's Story* (Fast Print, £12.99 ISBN 978-184426709-5).

Perhaps that smile is because his career spanned what might be termed a golden age for the modern RN (although his first taste of life at sea was with HMS Theseus in the Korean War).

His career also offers a window on a changing world, notably the end of empire, the rise of NATO, a multi-cultural Britain (and Navy...).

The latter came sharply into focus when HMS Falmouth visited Simon's Town in South Africa. The then Lt Murdoch had two West Indian sailors serving in his department... at a time when apartheid was in full effect.

That policy went against everything the junior officer stood for: trains were segregated, so too shops, even Table Mountain. Only in church did Don Murdoch refreshingly see apartheid ignored – for we are all equal in the eyes of God...

As for his two West Indian sailors "they did rather better ashore than most of their shipmates", as they were royally looked after by wealthy non-white South Africans.

That visit to Simon's Town occurred in the early 70s – by which time Britain was in the grip of an IRA bombing campaign and the Troubles were at their height.

Late one November Sunday Portsmouth dockyard received word of a bomb hidden in Bulwark's tiller flat. For more than three hours the entire ship was searched. There was no bomb – it was probably a drunken sailor concluded the police and Don, duty officer that night. The story was never revealed – until now "to avoid giving the oxygen of publicity to the hoaxer".

Don's Story is an extremely comprehensive memoir (500-plus pages) of life in a Royal Navy undergoing huge social and technological changes.

The Service Don Murdoch joined at the age of 15½ was one which was becoming increasingly electrical and hi-tech (the latter word hadn't been invented then, of course).

The one he left 35 years later had swapped valves for transistors, then finally chips. But it had also embraced many of the social changes which fundamentally altered the UK.

This was an era, says Don, "that encouraged men from less affluent backgrounds than before to carve out a career without feeling it necessary to hide, deny, or invent their origins, adopt a hyphenated name or assume an affected accent".

And some things never change. Naval humour.

When HMS Bulwark was exercising with the German Navy in the late 70s, sailors asked the ship's German exchange helicopter pilot for some helpful phrases so they could get along more easily on runs ashore. He obliged. "Don't worry, my friend will pay." Who says Germans don't have a sense of humour? As for the author, his last job was with commando carrier HMS Bulwark, by which time he was the oldest weapons engineer serving at sea.

He was charged with bringing her WE kit out of mothballs with limited funds and with many of the firms who'd produced equipment for Bulwark originally long since gone.

"Almost every job needed the skills of an old-fashioned artificer," says Don.

The Navy changes, but there's always a need for traditional skills and 'can-do' attitude.



● Royal Navy-manned landing craft LCA 1377 from HMS Prince Baudouin carrying American troops during preparations for Normandy in the spring of 1944
Picture: US National Archives (USA C-1087)

FAA serve up a thriller

IT DOES not get any easier to get the teams out but Navy **hockey** did itself prouder than proud in making a special effort turning out nine teams for the final outdoor Inter-Command Tournament of 50 for retiring RNHA secretary Alan Walker.

As well as the ten matches for the five senior men's teams from Portsmouth, Plymouth, Scotland, Naval Air and Royal Marines there were a further six women's matches featuring all of the above... except the Royals.

In addition, past and serving veterans competed in an excellent veterans match, two RN U23 teams played against each other and the Navy women took on a Havant team of young county/regional, even some junior international players in a fitting finale as the 19th match in a three-day event.

Normally a quarter of the hockey-playing Navy finds it possible to be present or available at any one time.

On this occasion it was more like ten per cent with several late withdrawals of key players.

Plymouth's honorary-appointed coach CPO(PT) Nick Carter of Yeovilton – also in his final Inter-Command event – worked wonders to even get a team: 27 male players were selected three weeks before the event only for them to lose about half that squad for Service reasons in the preceding week.

LPT Elise Griffiths (HMS Drake) too worked her socks off to get a Ladies team out for Plymouth who finished a creditable third.

Despite nine-tenths of the hockey-playing Navy *not* being able or permitted time for sport, the nine command teams produced the best Inter-Command tournament in anyone's memory.

Anyone who saw the fourth-fifth place match in the men's event could only marvel at the high standard achieved by both teams.

There were brave performances in the women's matches too; the absence of some of the habitual 'stars' made room for others to get their chance to shine.

In the women's contest, Naval Air were clear winners. It was good to see old colleagues returning to the fold, some after several seasons of being at sea.

Scotland had brought the largest squad where skipper Laura Laing, back safely home from Afghanistan, gave credit at the presentations to goalkeeper Amy Logan and team secretary LPT Regaina Cawley.

For Plymouth ABs Elise Broughton and

Rachel Walters (both HMS Campbeltown) were nominated for team awards. Finally for Portsmouth, LS Rebecca Hunter and S/Lt Helen Taylor received nominations for their contributions from RNHA Vice President and former President RNHA Rear Admiral Ian Tibbitt attending as one of 20 (nine ex-serving and 11 serving) umpires and officials.

In the men's competition, each team played two matches on Day 1 with Air and RM topping the leaderboard, and Plymouth and Scotland yet to open their accounts.

The opening match on Day 2 was significant as – for the first time in years – Portsmouth beat the Green Machine 3-1. Cdre Mark Darlington was inspirational in this match along with Welsh international Danny Makaruk (HMS Illustrious), while Air duly beat Plymouth 2-0.

The resurgent Portsmouth took Scotland apart 9-3, the former with an eye on an Inter-Command win, the latter fighting for their very lives – a cracking match.

RM vs Air was a wonderful match too with a great deal riding on the result. A win or draw would seal the tournament for the Fleet Air Arm; a 1-0 win for Royal would give the title to Pompey, while the marines needed around six goals to win the event themselves.

The 2-2 draw – an outstanding match with a capacity crowd – saw the RM knocked off their at-least-seven-year perch of superiority. The Naval Air Command teams then embarked on a celebration which went on long into the night.

Portsmouth were limited to second place, being left to rue their misfortune in not having all their players available on the Thursday.

Royal ended in a most-unaccustomed third place, having sustained not-as-good availability as usual, possibly due to their ten days in Virginia Beach the week before, where a much stronger RM team lost in the final on penalties of the world-famous JFK Memorial Tournament.

The final match of the men's event was between Scotland and Plymouth. What a match! Scotland took it 5-4

with a winning goal in the dying seconds by LA(Phot) Stuart Hill.

There were some weary legs tottering out to take part in the veterans' matches, one team led by Admiral Tibbitt, the other by WO Shane Lovett (CTC RM Lymington).

Shane is to be also congratulated on two counts: first for being chosen by CSHA to lead the Combined Services over 50s men's team and also for being selected – along with Mne Alan Thomson and former Lt John Barratt – for the England over 50s squad.

The U23s match was next, marshalled and organised by RN U23 coach CPO Colin 'Connor' McClure.

ET(ME) Matt Balcombe (1 AGRM) and LLogs Graham Kerr (Northwood) captained/managed the teams and it is clear there is a great deal of new talent around.

This tournament was conspicuous in giving chances for full command representation to more U23 age-group players than ever before.

The Navy women's game added a final polish to a splendid three days of hockey.

The sun had shone throughout and the RN girls generally coped well with their talented young opponents.

This match notched up yet another milestone in coach Mark Darlington's quest to restore the RN team to former glories of 20 years ago. Back then the Army and RAF were in absolute dread of the Navy women, who were at the top for 13 years in a 16-year cycle 1971-86.

What goes round comes around – there are a few potential Ark Royals emerging in the Navy defence with an encouraging number of Daring class zipping around up front.

It's now full steam ahead for the inter-specialisation tournament mixed-gender seven-a-side event featuring 224 games (12 or 15 minutes long) over two days.

Teams from logistics (four or five), medical (four), Fleet Air Arm (four), warfare (ten), Royal Marines (four), submarines (three), engineers (three) – and maybe a few others are set to play in up to five pools at HMS Sultan, Whale Island and Burnaby Road on Saturday and Sunday July 3-4.

More details from rns01@fleetfost.mod.uk or alanwalker@hockeyman.freeserve.co.uk





● Ark Royal's AB(WS) Laura Davies breaks away from Liverpool's ladies in a 25-0 trouncing of the destroyer's team in Mayport
Picture: LA(Phot) Gregg Macready, HMS Ark Royal

Ark lifts Auriga cup

WHILE alongside in Mayport, the ship's companies of HM Ships Ark Royal, Liverpool and Sutherland plus RFA Fort George took a well-earned rest from the Auriga 2010 deployment to play each other at a variety of sports.

Under the blazing Florida sun the football, rugby, volleyball and netball teams turned out in force to do battle.

Ark Royal provided five football teams, Liverpool four, with more sides from RFA Fort George and HMS Sutherland.

After a bitterly-fought tournament, the final was between Ark's marine engineering department and the flagship's 1st XI.

At half-time the score was 1-1, but the strength of the first team shone through in the end, winning by a resounding 6-1.

With a sun-baked ground, the rugby matches were a battle of attrition.

In the men's tournament it was particularly close between the teams with only one point separating the top three sides.

Liverpool drew upon their great rugby pedigree and saw off all opponents to beat Ark Royal and Sutherland into joint second place.

The ladies' tournament was equally tough as Ark Royal's rookie team faced Liverpool in their first-ever game. The 'Spirit of the Ark' shone through in the end, after a tense first half, with the carrier beating 'The Scousers' 25-0; 'man of the match' went to Logs (SC)

Green from Ark Royal.

The beaches of the USA have not seen such great naval volleyball action since *Top Gun* first aired – that was until the 22 teams from the Auriga Task Group hit the sand!

Three teams made steady progress throughout the early stages of the competition, defeating their opponents in short order; The flagship's The Captain's Team and Team Ark Royal soon progressed through the competition along with Liverpool's Vincy Utd.

The final score was 15-11 to Vincy Utd, who displayed fantastic skill and teamwork and loved beating the captain of the Navy's most senior ship!

The rivalry between the ships was clear to see throughout the sporting events.

This led to a healthy level of competitive sports with many closely-fought and entertaining matches taking place.

Despite the best efforts of other teams the biggest ship eventually won the day with Ark Royal receiving the overall cup.

After a hard day on the sports pitch, the evening saw a coming together of the teams to swap stories and socialise with their oppos from the other task units.

One of the many highlights was the band put together by Ark's officers. They managed to put together an impressive set including an appearance by task force commander Cdre Simon Ancona on harmonica.

Gemma and Keith dominate fencing

THE RN fencing championships were staged at HMS Temeraire with two full days of action involving all three weapons: foil, épée and sabre.

Two individuals in particular stood out. Numbers attending rose again, particularly in the ladies competition but this did not stop LMEA Gemma Wollaston taking the individual titles in all three weapons, and clearly being the master swordswoman for the second year running.

Lt Keith Bowers took home the master swordsman of the event, coming top in both épée and sabre, with Lt Cdr Adrian Olliver winning the foil title.

The penultimate event was the Inter-Command ladies foil championships.

Plymouth started off strongly, gaining an 18-point lead in the rolling 45 competition; this was impressively reduced by Lt Caila Barnett in the final three minutes to win 45-42 for the Portsmouth Command team.

Finally the six-person Inter-Command event was fought hard by all three entries, with Plymouth Command taking the victory for the final competition of the weekend.

A new member of the Portsmouth Club, which meets at HMS Sultan on a Tuesday evening, S/Lt Gail Hodgkinson said: "As a beginner to the art of fencing I was somewhat apprehensive about the event and it turned out that there was no need to be as I was welcomed like any other."

"I enjoyed all aspects of the championships, from the sporting to the social side, and would definitely recommend this sport that can be enjoyed both at sea and alongside to anyone and everyone."

In other areas, arrangements are made for naval fencers to be part of local clubs.

The championships will help with the selection of the team for the Inter-Services Triangular on September 6 and then for the individual Inter-Services championships the following days.

RN fencing has a series of events over the year and will have teams competing in both the RAF one-hit épée and Guernsey prior to the Inter-Unit three-person team competition in London on November 27

Details at www.navyfencing.co.uk.

Royal's kendo attitude

THIS year's RN and RM Martial Arts Association Championships were held at HMS Temeraire, Portsmouth.

The aim of the championships is to select the best possible RN squad to compete against the Army and RAF at the annual Inter-Service Championships.

The day was a great success with good turn outs from karate, taekwondo and kendo.

All events were fiercely contested, with all competitors displaying great fighting spirit and control.

With a lot of new blood entering the championships this year the karate events were eagerly awaited.

The first event of the day was the individual kata with good performances from all competitors.

In both the junior and dan grade categories the standard was so high that the judges commented on the difficulty they had in scoring the displays. With very little difference in the scores the results were:

Dan grade kata: 1 – AB(WS) Arran Lakeman, 2 – AET Fraser-Shaw; junior grade kata: 1 – ET(ME) Fred Bulpit, 2 – WO1 Trevor Starkey.

Next came the individual kumite (sparring). Again all competitors gave a very good account of themselves in some very fierce bouts, all showing dogged determination and excellent fighting spirit.

The scoring in all bouts reflected the closeness of the contests with the results as follows:

Dan grade kumite: 1 – AB(WS) Lakeman, 2 – AET Fraser-Shaw; junior grade kumite: 1 – AET Sullivan, 2 – WO1 Starkey.

The final karate event was the team kumite and after some very spirited performances throughout the event the eventual outcome was: 1 – Maj Graham Adcock RM, AB(WS) Lakeman, WO1 Trevor Starkey, 2 – ET(ME) Kiel Graham, AET Dominic Fraser-Shaw, ET(ME) Bulpit

The overall karate champions for 2010 are the Royal Navy.

The weapons kata event saw two excellent displays of kendo no kata by PO Taff Howells and Mne Chris Gray. Competitors carry out a series of strikes and defences using the *bokken* (wooden version of the samurai sword). This was followed by a superb display with the *jo* (Japanese short staff) by Maj Adcock.

After deep contemplation and long discussions by the judging panel the results were: 1 – Maj Adcock, 2 – Mne Gray.

The start of a new taekwondo season sees the first of the four competitions open to Service personnel with the RN/RM



● 'The way of the foot and fist'... MA Kylie Springall (RM Chivenor) demonstrates the former during the taekwondo contest
Picture: LA(Phot) Dave Jenkins, FRPU East

championships being a fuller, more engaging tournament than previous years and thus producing a vibrant spirit and some hearty performances from both sides.

Without delay (and warm-up!), the dan grade patterns category got under way, providing a template and example for junior grades – for most this was their first serious competition.

ITF taekwondo patterns are judged on key components comprising: acceleration, power, control/balance and sharpness as a basis, then viewed in terms of the specific movement sequence.

These key components form an integral part of body conditioning and transitional coordination which transfer into military application especially when operating in an urban route.

The dan grade pattern saw L/Cpl Tovey pick up gold as he performed a first-degree pattern gae-beak (46 moves).

The sparring at junior level was controlled and disciplined, providing selectors for the Navy team with a good view of potential stars.

The men's individual sparring concluded in a fiercely-competitive fight between Mne 'Vegas' Peplow and Cpl 'Lemmy' Mottershead, with some tense moments and solid sparring. Lemmy was

victorious, winning with a slim margin on points ahead of Vegas.

The dan grades were limited in numbers and saw L/Cpl Tovey fight Mne Allinson in a straight two-round final. The lance corporal took gold.

The culmination of the day's events ended with a RN vs Royal Marines team tournament as both sides fielded five fighters.

Or rather the Royals only fielded four as they were a man down and conceded one bout.

That was soon rectified with the swift despatch of the first Navy fighter by Mne Allinson, followed by Mottershead winning the second fight, even with the most girly of girl punches which confused the audience into thinking that Lemmy was actually suffering with a mild stroke, with arms flailing like a sparrow!

L/Cpl Tovey in the "jacket" of manners proceeded to repeatedly place foot and fist into the face of the last Navy fighter (who previously had been smashed by Mne Peplow!) to secure victory for the RM. Job well done.

Kendo had its first outing at the RNRM championships and was well-supported by both Services.

The Royal Marines won outright with a dazzling display of kendo and superior numbers!

Mne Gray proved unstoppable

fighting through the rounds and winning the individual knockout competition.

Then the RM kendo team won outright in the team competition due to superior numbers and, of course, the chance for Royal to beat the Navy with a stick. (Hmmm... no triumphalism there, then – Sports Ed).

More details about the various sports from: karate: Maj Adcock at graham.adcock505@mod.uk or 94371 8105; taekwondo: C/Sgt Al Curtin at alan.curtin438@mod.uk or 93832 8083; and kendo: PO Taff Howells at taffhowells@hotmail.co.uk or 9375 65668.

Judo squad Channel energy for Manny

THE RN Judo Association visited Guernsey to compete against the Channel Islands for the Sgt John Manuel Memorial Trophy.

The Trophy is named in memory of 'Manny' Manuel, a RNJA member who was killed in Afghanistan in December 2008.

During the visit, CPO John Thacker – 4th Dan and BJA senior coach – ran training sessions including several with local children's clubs.

Mne Chris Sherrington has firmly established himself as the current GB No.1 heavyweight, recently taking medals in both a European Cup event and the British Open.

He has also been selected to represent Great Britain in the World Championships in Tokyo later this year. His increasing celebrity status resulted in television and radio interviews during the visit, raising the Navy's profile significantly.

The main event consisted of the Royal Navy team competing against Jersey then Guernsey.

After some closely-fought bouts the Navy team retained the memorial trophy for the second year running, beating both Jersey and Guernsey convincingly.

RN players find it difficult to practise sufficiently when deployed, but showed consistent progress throughout the event.

This was demonstrated during the final team match with all players showing considerable fighting spirit in the 10-2 victory over a combined Channel Islands team.

For further information on RN Judo visit rnjudo.com or contact CPO Thacker on 01743 232541.

Rough – and not much smooth

THE Christmas races are a mainstay sporting fixture for islanders in the Falklands, but the island's capital has other delights for the sportsman, not least a 'challenging' 18-hole golf course.

Stanley Golf Club invited HMS Portland to take part in a friendly. The matelots jumped at the chance, despite it being the depths of winter in the southern hemisphere, writes CPO Les Willock.

As the frigate's eight avid golfers waited for the boat to take them ashore uncertainty reigned as they speculated about the upcoming match.

Could the match still be played with 25 knots of wind with a worsening forecast? Which would be greater challenge: avoiding grazing sheep or dodging lowland geese? With club members maintaining their own course, Stanley is renowned as being unique!

A warm welcome greeted the ship's team at the club and following a draw the game commenced with a shot-gun start. The wind had picked up and



the wind chill was around 2-3°C but that did not dampen the spirits; the Portland golfers were just happy to dust off the irons and swing a few clubs for the first time during the deployment.

The standard of the course was pleasing, although in places it was difficult to determine where the fairway ended and the rough

started. The stalwart locals had erected red marker posts to give the visitors a clue where to aim for, but with winds gusting up to 35kts staying on the fairway was challenging.

Much to the surprise of some, the Portlanders persevered and managed to eke out a draw.

Picture: LA(Phot) Simmo Simpson

Royals too strong for Navy U25s

THE RN U25 cricket team opened the season at Burnaby Road, against a very strong Royal Marines side, writes Lt Cdr David Cooke RNCC.

After winning the toss, the Corps – fielding five current RN representative players – had no hesitation in batting.

Although two recognised RM batsmen fell cheaply to under 25 newcomers, scores of 90 from L/Cpl A Haw (42 Cdo), 59 from Cpl A Pollard (Cdo Logs) and an undefeated 45 from Cpl J Crasham (RM Poole) assisted the Corps to a most respectable score of 296-9 off 50 overs.

Some of the young Navy players spoiled their figures with too many wides – the 4th highest score at 33.

Pick of the U25's bowlers were AB D Thurgood (Montrose) 4-65 off ten overs, (ETME) E Temprow (Bulwark) 2-46 off ten and ETME S Louis (Edinburgh) 2-49.

The batting response from the U25 team was generally poor. However, new boy (AB) Ian Buss (Collingwood) opened the batting with Mid Karl Hewitt (RAF Cranwell) and looked a good prospect.

Hewitt fell early, triggering a ripple of wickets to a variety of RM bowlers, Temprow (28) helped the cause, but only Buss appeared comfortable, eventually carrying his bat throughout the innings for a well-deserved 72 not out.

Some of the RM bowlers also had difficulties with wides, conceding 37 in all; second highest score to Buss in an overall score of 194 all out.

■ IF 50 overs are just too many to endure as a spectator, well, good news because 2010 heralds a new dawn for RN cricket with the introduction of the Inter-Service Twenty20 competition at Lord's on Tuesday July 27.

After the successful Army-RN matches at the Home of Cricket over the past two seasons, the MCC have very kindly invited all three Services to Lord's for this year's annual contest.

RN cricket sponsors Kiwi are also the main sponsors of the event, where it is anticipated a large and enthusiastic crowd will enjoy what promises to be an exciting spectacle.

All three teams will play each other on the day; as the RN are this year's 'home team', they will play their second match as the last fixture of the day which should be a fitting finale.

Gates open at 9am for a 10am start to the first match and the event is open to the public. Tickets are available on the gate or in advance on 0203 405 1880 or e-mail info@ist20.com. MCC members will be able to use their existing concessions.

Further information can be obtained from Lt Cdr Cooke on 02392 723741 or e-mail rnso4@fleetfost.mod.uk.

RM cream of the ice

■ Continued from page 48

Navy Inter-Services title. Despite the Army scoring first, the RAF would once again come back and dominate a physical game littered with penalties for a 7-2 win and their second Inter-Services title in a row.

Overall, the tournament was a significant success for the Naval Service, coming home with silverware for the fourth year running.

The expansion of its entry to four teams also showed that the sport continues to grow as it attracts new players through grass roots sports events.

Further details about RN ice hockey can be found on DII, on the web at www.rniha.org.uk and via the team's Facebook page.

Coach trip to Kuwait

FUN. Sun. Football. What's not to like? Sailors from HMS St Albans headed to Kuwait's centre of excellence when it comes to the beautiful game.

The Premier Football Academy of Kuwait – affiliated to Everton FC – offers a 'football for all' programme for three to 18 year-olds.

The organisation's director of football Mike Finn and administrator, 'Baker' Al-Nazer invited the frigate's RNFA-qualified coaches to deliver a two-hour coaching session for a group of 25 youngsters aged between 12 and 16.

Lt Cdr 'Terry' Gibson, WO1 'Ginge' Keay and CPO 'George' Park (the latter pictured right by LA(Phot) Steve Johncock) were hugely impressed by the standard of football.

Young footballing protégés of various nationalities had benefited from the 'Everton Way' coaching programme.

Skills demonstrated and practised by the children ranged from long and short-range shooting, goalkeeper training and organised defending. No session would be complete without the obligatory small-sided game at the end, divided between the two distinct age groups.

With the final whistle blown and after an intensive training session, the RN coaches rewarded the players with the only kit to be seen in during a World Cup year: England strips donated by the RNFA.



Open season for Chris

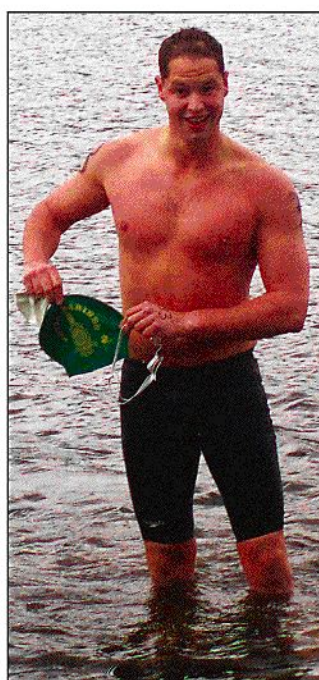
A COLD overcast day dawned at Lake Bala in North Wales as around 150 entrants put their bodies on the line in the quest for glory at the annual Inter-Services open water swimming championships which are held over one and three and the blue riband five-kilometre event.

Wet suits are not allowed, the water temperature was stated as being 16°C (compared with the 14°C air temperature) but most competitors would be prepared to say it was nearer a very chilly 12°C in the cold fresh waters of the lake, writes Lt Cdr Alan Walker.

At 10am, 32 brave souls entered the water. With their white swim hats numbered and the same numbers indelibly written on both shoulders, seven sailors and marines, two RAF personnel, a handful of civilians and a lot of soldiers took off at a brisk pace on the first 2½-kilometre lap of a two lap race around the widest part of the lake which was policed by power boats and a number of canoes and kayaks.

Habitual swimmers generally possess mean, lean bodies and it was the really slim-built people who succumbed first to the numbing effect of the cold.

First home in the five-kilometre was Royal Marine Cpl Chris Bumby (who won all three events in 2009).



Royal Marines invariably display a modest outer exterior but are hard as nails on the inside and just will not be beaten come what may.

Cpl Bumby (pictured proudly showing off his Corps swimming cap) typifies all that is best of the ethos of the RM as he emerged as winner for a second year in succession in this the top race of the three at Bala this year.

Hot on his heels was a civilian female – one of GB's best Open Water swimmers just 22 seconds behind – followed by another civvy in third place around five minutes later.

The next Serviceman home was Chief Tech Simon 'Woolly' Wooldridge, a veteran of Bala of some 20 years, on 1h 19m 04s.

Fifth place was taken by the RN's Lt Steve Berry, another veteran; the author remembers Apprentice Berry's first swim in 1987, this being not far off his 24th year of entry in succession.

As the second Navy swimmer home Steve's time of 1h 20m 23s would add to Chris Bumby's 1h 14m 10s towards the overall Inter Service's trophy.

Next in was the RAF's Alison Pippin in 1h 26m 25s, so the Air Force also had two swimmers home.

She was followed by a naval flurry. In eighth, Lt Cdr Ali Witt (back from Canada two days earlier), then ninth AB(D) Chris Collins (just back from Afghanistan) and the top ten was rounded off by Maj Andy Mason (RM Poole).

The first female sailor to finish was POMA Mhairi Muri, one of the RN's top pool swimmers who had allowed herself to be talked out of her wetsuit. Her colleague Musn Caitlin O'Malley – always the toughest of competitors – had had to give in after one brave 2½-kilometre lap.

With six swimmers finishing in the first 11 the Navy had won the event outright.

The next event was the three-kilometre race with 36 competitors. A dozen had to retire because they exceeded the 1h 35m time limit for completion.

Chris Bumby took the title again (47m 25s), but most of the RN swimmers were relative newcomers and great white hopes for the future, such as 25-year-old AB(Sea) Martin Longbottom (DRSU Portsmouth) who came in a very creditable fifth place in 56m 22.33s. (He was also the third Serviceman home.) Not far behind in 12th Service place/third RN place was AET David Jackson (HMS Sultan) swimming breaststroke – always reckoned to be more difficult to maintain when the water is really cold.

In the single-kilometre race there was a staggering 85 entrants who took to the water in the third and final race of the day; all but two would finish.

Not content with having swum eight kilometres already – and winning both races – Chris Bumby racked up his third phenomenal win in 15m 16.91s.

Major Andy Mason RM was a minute and a half behind his young colleague while Cpl Billy Sewell (RM Poole), swimming in his first Bala race after losing his left leg in Afghanistan three years ago, came 35th overall (third RN swimmer home).

Billy had been invited into the Army's Battle Back organisation via the good offices of Army Swimming's open water maestro Lt Col Rob Healey.

Go on be a smarty, train in Spain with Marty

"FANCY a week in Lanzarote, Royal?"

"Roger, doing what exactly?"

"Triathlon."

"Gen?! Errrr"

I'd almost forgotten that I had e-mailed the Royal Navy Triathlon Association a couple of months back asking about some triathlon training as I was new to triathlon – I had no idea it was going to be in Lanzarote though, writes Mne Marty Deming (pictured right after one exhausting session).

Despite being new to the club everyone was very welcoming but unfortunately everyone was in good shape. I'd been hoping to find loads of fat matelots and not a load of people that look like they haven't had a day off phys in years. Never mind...

In Club La Santa it was a different story and things couldn't have been better: great weather, great company and a great location. The hotel was something else: a sportsman's paradise with

everything all in one place: 50m outdoor pool, leisure pool, lagoon for watersports, 400m track, tennis courts, squash courts, football pitches, the lot.

Upon arrival it was straight to bed ready for an early start with a five-mile run.

The training programme was put together by Cpl Gaz Gerrard, – an age group world champion, multiple-times winner of the Inter-Services triathlon race and a trained Level 2 British Triathlon coach.

That consisted of phys three times a day apart from the few days where we would only train twice.

Quality, constructive training that would get the team ready for the Inter-Services race (and foster some team-building) was the key but from a novice perspective it did seem that quantity was important too, albeit in a slightly daunting way.

I quickly learned that recovery

was as important as the training – eating, hydrating and resting were needed if I was to keep up with the programme and the facilities helped enable me to do this.

Not only did I learn a huge amount about triathlon and training, the week also offered some unique experiences such as running with the legend that is Dr Ron Hill.

He invited the club to join him on his morning five-mile run. For a man in his 70s it was an inspiration to us all.

For me the week was absolutely brilliant. Sure, it was a steep learning curve but I couldn't have asked for a better environment and group to be with to be introduced to the sport.

The amount I picked up over the week would have taken me months to learn and it was fantastic to be able to do so in such a great location.

More details at www.rnmtri.co.uk



Reel success for coarse fishermen

TONG Norton Mere – private syndicate water near Telford – was the venue chosen by the RAF for this year's Inter-Services coarse angling championships, writes WO1 Hughie Welsh, team manager.

Due to service reasons the Maver Royal Navy team were only able to practise for two days in beautiful weather whilst the RAF and Army managed to fish on the Sunday.

Before the match there was not a lot of information on the venue but the RAF seemed to believe this was a roach-type venue – and this also seemed to be the Army's way ahead.

Maver Royal Navy joint team captains CPO Nick Jones (HMS Tireless) and Sgt Ads Palmer (CTCRM) thought otherwise and decided to target the bream using feeder tactics.

Having had the best of the practice days by far, the Senior Service decided it was all-or-nothing on match day.

A cooler day made for a good match. From the start the Maver Royal Navy match team took charge, winning seven out of 12 sections, with four section runner-ups.

Overall Maver Royal Navy won the match convincingly with 30pts, RAF 26 and the Army 16.

CPO Keith Massheder (RNAS Yeovilton) was the individual winner with a brilliant 83lb 4oz.

AET John Gaylard (RNAS Yeovilton) was individual runner-up with a superb 65lb 12oz.

In total, we had four out of the six top weights.

Other section winners were Mne Dan Pither (42 Cdo), CPO Jones, CPO Whisky Walker (HMS Neptune), CPO Tim Broughton (RNAS Yeovilton) and Sgt Palmer.

A great team effort by all resulted in the trophy returning to RNRMAA for the second time in three years having only won it on three occasions in the previous 33 years.

Sean's time has come

■ Continued from page 48

and four fellow riders headed to the National Ten-Mile TT Champs hosted by Stratford CC near Salford Priors in the Midlands.

The course proved to be reasonable with a slight drag but the weather was very hot, making it hard for all concerned.

The overall winner was the multiple British time trial champion Dr Michael Hutchinson, who completed the ten miles in 18m 37s, recording an average speed of just over 32 mph.

CPO Childs had a mediocre day by his high standards and finished 27th in the ultra-competitive field.

Most worthy of note was Lt Cdr Lee Sanderson (HMS Raleigh), who recorded a personal best time of 21m 21s to finish 66th.

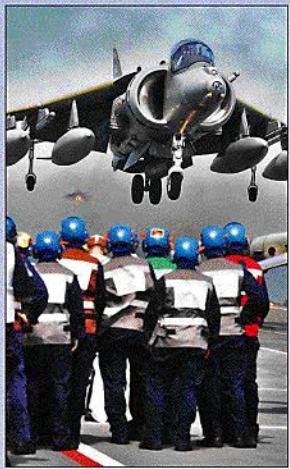
The other Navy results were: Garry Drew on 21m 27s (27.972mph average) was posted 72nd place, followed by Steve Kelly 21m 48s (27.523mph) in 98th and the final RN competitor Andrew Phipps in 142nd place on 22m 48s (26.316mph).

Jumpers take fifth

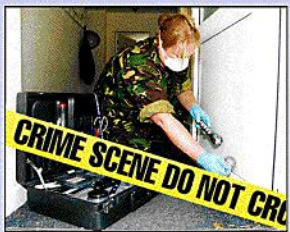
RN Show Jumping and Eventing Team came away with an excellent fifth place in the military class at the Royal Windsor Horse Show.

The team comprised Rear Admiral Simon Charlier, Lt Cdr Suzanne Clark and Lt Elizabeth Oldfield.

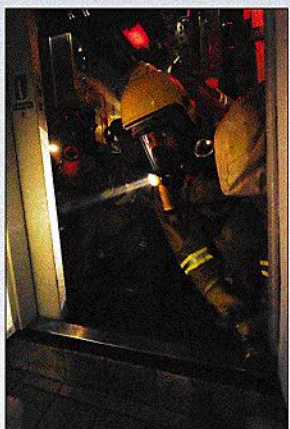
Next month



**Chariot 'ere
– Auriga
task force
gets down to
business**



**Prints of
thieves –
inside the
Navy police's
crime house**



**Where's
the fire?
Portland
'enjoys' a
visit from
FOST in the
Falklands**

Plus

**Wedding
presence
– a Royal
occasion for
HMS Kent**


 **SPORT**


● Mnes Robin Borum (No.13) and Karl Sullivan (No.4 – both UKLF CSG) help clear the net in front of Royal Marines keeper Tom Chamberlain (45 Cdo) during the commandos' 2-1 victory over RAF Lossiemouth to lift the Tri-Service Command trophy Picture: Cpl Gareth Nutley, RAF Cosford

RM cream of the ice

MORE than 200 service ice hockey players converged on Ice Sheffield in South Yorkshire for the 2010 Combined Inter-Services and Tri-Service Command Ice Hockey Championships.

The tournament has grown from humble beginnings in 2005 into one of the largest ice hockey competitions in the UK, with over 60 hours of hockey spread over 3½ days of competition, writes Lt Cdr Alain Bernard, the out-going general secretary of the Royal Navy Ice Hockey Association. It's also a competition in which the Senior Service has done well, returning with silverware every year since 2006.

The Navy would enter four teams in the two divisions of the Tri-Service Command (TSC) element of the competition this year, a significant increase over the two teams it has traditionally competed with in the past.

Following the success of the first RN Cup in February, teams from the Royal Marines, Navy General Service (GS) and the Fleet Air Arm (FAA) would compete in the Intermediate Division while the Navy Development team would battle for the Development Division Title.

In addition to the Command Championships, the best players from each service would be selected from the various station, regimental and command teams to represent their parent service for the concurrent Inter-Services title during the evenings.

The Navy General Service were the defending TSC champions while the Navy Inter-Services squad had secured back-to-back Forces titles in 2007 and 2008 before losing to the RAF in 2009.

The TSC teams were separated into three pools for the group stage of the competition. The Royal Marines and GS teams would find themselves drawn in what could arguably be described as the strongest group alongside the RAF Cup winners, RAF Benson, and runners-up, RAF Lossiemouth, in

Group A. Navy GS narrowly beat Lossiemouth to win the TSC title last year.

The FAA faced the Army All-Stars (the perennial favourites and two-time winners), RAF Leuchars and the Army Air Corps in Group B. The final group contained the RLC, REME, RAF Cranwell/Wittering and RAF Cosford.

The Royal Marines finished second in Group A after losing a 2-1 nail-biter to RAF Lossiemouth. Their two wins and one defeat record coupled with their excellent goal difference merited a bye to the quarter finals as the highest-ranked second place team ahead of the Army RLC and Army Air Corps.

Navy General Service finished fourth in difficult Group A and ranked tenth overall and played seventh-place RAF Cosford in the play-offs. The FAA finished 12th and took on the fifth-place Army RLC in their play-off. In the Developmental Division, despite two draws, the navy team came fourth and faced first-place finishers RAF North in their semi-final match-up.

The FAA lost their play-off 6-0 against the Army RLC, despite out-shooting the opposition. The FAA's inability to score would be their main downfall during the tournament.

The RLC advanced to play the Royal Marines in the first quarter final, where the marines had little difficulty in sweeping aside their Army opponents 6-1.

The Navy GS team caused the first upset, eliminating RAF Cosford (who had finished three places ahead of them) 6-0 for a quarter-final clash with REME.

In the Development Division, the Navy lost an overtime heartbreaker 1-0 to RAF North. A scoreless draw after regulation time led to sudden death overtime when a fluke long distance shot would catch the Navy keeper off-guard to give the RAF team a place in the final.

The Navy GS and REME quarter-final provided one of the most thrilling games of the tournament. With less than two minutes to go in regulation time

and the Navy GS side down 2-1, POET Kieran Wilson (MASF) scored to force overtime. The first sudden death overtime period saw Wilson beat the REME keeper again, only to be denied by the crossbar. In the second overtime period, with legs getting tired, the Navy had to scramble to kill off a two-minute man disadvantage. With the teams at even-strength again, REME took advantage of the Navy's short bench and scored on a fine individual effort with only seconds to go in the second overtime period for a 3-2 win.

The Royal Marines edged the Army All-Stars 2-1 in a tight checking game to advance to their first final while RAF Lossiemouth beat REME comfortably 3-0 for their third straight trip to the final in as many years. In the Development Division, Army defeated RAF South to face RAF North in the final while the Navy beat RAF South 3-2 to take third place.

In the TSC Intermediate Division placement matches, the FAA lost to RAF Eastern Crusade to finish 12th while the Navy GS team defeated the Army Air Corps 2-1 in sudden death overtime to take seventh spot overall.

The TSC Intermediate Division final between the Royal Marines and RAF Lossiemouth proved to be another very close game, similar to that between the two teams in the group stages.

The match saw excellent end-to-end action with plenty of action for both keepers. After the teams exchanged goals in the first and second periods, the score remained tied 1-1 until mid-way through the third period when the commandos slipped another one past the RAF Lossiemouth keeper. The RAF were unable to beat Mne Tom Chamberlain (45 Cdo) again, the marine being solid throughout the tournament.

The 2-1 result meant the Royal Marines lifted the TSC trophy in their first participation, ensuring the TSC Intermediate Division title remained within the Naval Service for the second year running. The Development Division went to RAF North after

they beat the Army 3-2 in a close-fought final.

The top-flight Inter-Services would be similar to the 2009 results with neither Navy nor Army able to significantly challenge the RAF's deep and balanced squad.

Despite scoring first, the Senior Service lost to the RAF 5-3 in a lacklustre performance on opening night, when the scoreline could have been a lot worse if it were not for the efforts of Navy keeper Tom Chamberlain.

The Navy regrouped and dominated the Army en route to a convincing 6-0 win the following evening in a game covered by BFBS.

Mne Adam Hankins (FSRT) played another strong game in his final appearance in a Navy shirt before leaving the Service in July.

Hankins was voted the 2010 tournament's most valuable player having dominated Forces hockey for the past three years; he was one of the main reasons that the Navy won back-to-back titles in 2007 and 2008.

The Navy's one win and one defeat record meant they needed the Army to defeat the RAF by more than three goals (but less than seven) to deliver a 2010

Continued on page 47



Sean's time has come

WITH his eyes fixed on the road, CPO(PT) Sean Childs powers along the Cornish lanes.

It's this single-mindedness which has earned the 39-year-old senior clubz – and mainstay of RN cycling – the honour of Sportsman of the Year.

Sean, serving at HMS Raleigh, decided to concentrate his energies on cycling in 2004 after many years of success at triathlon, duathlon and running.

It's seven years since any fellow member of the Senior Service has beaten him on a time trial, and six since a soldier or airman posted better results.

Last year he was part of a three-man RN/RM team which became UK 24-hour team time trial champions.

In their first appearance at the event, CPO Childs and his fellow cyclists achieved a combined total of 1,386 miles, the best combined distance for nearly 18 years.

The 39-year-old clocked up a total of 492.41 miles in the race, setting a new Combined Service record and maintaining an average speed of 20 miles per hour throughout. He missed out on the individual honours by just five miles.

He also went on to win the Welsh 12-hour title with a distance of 277.4 miles (his fourth Welsh title) and was ranked Britain's No.1 long-distance all-rounder.

The senior rating was presented with the NATO Cup by Second Sea Lord Vice Admiral Sir Alan Massey aboard HMS Victory.

"It is a massive achievement to be recognised in such a manner and it is the result of years of hard work, commitment and sacrifice," said Sean.

"Mixing a 50-60 hour working week along with raising a young family, whilst trying to train and compete at the highest possible standard is a challenge in itself. I am lucky that my wife is so understanding."

Most recently CPO Childs competed in the Inter-Service ten and 25-mile time trial and achieved the fastest times in both events to take the individual and team titles with two other members of the RNRMC.

It was Sean's eighth ten-mile title and his sixth consecutive 25-mile title. The RNRMC were the winners of the team event for the sixth consecutive year.

From there the senior rating

Continued on page 47



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To the last round: After Dunkirk



● *British and French troops file up the steep cliffs at St Valéry-en-Caux after a forlorn mission by the Royal Navy – Operation Cycle – to rescue them*

FOR a fortnight there had been a disarming quiet along the banks of the Somme and the Aisne.

Here had brushed the left flank of the armoured wedge driven across northern France by the panzers as they thrust to the sea.

In their wake had come German infantry, bolstering the flank, in places crossing the two great rivers. And there the Hun had stayed, resolutely, for two weeks now.

There had been efforts to dislodge the foe – one General Charles de Gaulle had bludgeoned the bridgehead at Abbeville – but all had failed.

And so the uneasy stand-off

persisted. It persisted until the first streaks of light glimmered on the eastern horizon on Wednesday June 5 1940. Thousands of muzzle flashes glowed briefly in the half-light along a 100-mile stretch of front from the mouth of the Somme to Laon on the Aisne.

"It's a relief for the men," wrote a soldier in Germany's 57 *Infanterie Division*. "After long days in foxholes, after heavy artillery and losses, now we're advancing. We don't need tanks, our artillery, anti-tank guns, field guns, machine-guns,

carbines and hand-grenades tear holes in the enemy's lines."

Thus began the last act of the Battle of France. Within two weeks, the French would be suing for peace. Within three, the guns would be silent. Like the first act, it would demand the sacrifice of friend and foe. It would herald another evacuation from the continent – a 'forgotten Dunkirk' – and the worst maritime tragedy in British history.

However much the newspapers of the day trumpeted the homecoming

of the British Expeditionary Force, evacuation at Dunkirk did not bring the curtain down on Britain's involvement on the continent.

There were more than 100,000 Britons still in France after Dunkirk: rear area and supply units, RAF formations, liaison officers and staffs, and not least the fighting men of the 51st Highland Division.

In fact, fresh troops were still arriving in France: 52nd Division and the 1st Canadian. In all, there were in excess of 150,000 Commonwealth personnel on the Continent.

They were on the Continent less to thwart the renewed German attack when it came – and it would come – than to bolster the resolve of their faltering ally.

And the resolve of Britain's ally was faltering. France had already dismissed her military leader, 68-year-old General Maurice Gamelin, and replaced him with one five years his senior, Maxime Weygand. The new commander hardly exuded confidence.

"This war is sheer madness," he told a conference of Allied leaders.

"We've gone to war with a 1918 army against a German Army of 1939."

Weygand was exaggerating. But the first three weeks of battle had cost the Allies the flower of their armies – 61 divisions had been destroyed, among them half France's armour. "Three-quarters, if not four-fifths, of our most modern equipment was captured," he wrote. "Our units in the north were the best armed. They were our spearhead. The best of the French Army was captured."

What was left would be shown no mercy by the Germans.

Continued on page ii

After the uninspiringly-titled *Fall Gelb* – Plan Yellow – which had entrapped the Allied armies at Dunkirk, the German military machine devised *Fall Rot* – Plan Red – to finish off France. Red would deliver two blows. One thrust along the Channel coast, the other a few days later into the heart of the republic.

At dawn on June 5, Hitler's Army struck. On the very extremity of the German front, St Valéry-sur-Somme, a motorised brigade and infantry division ran headlong into Major General Victor Fortune's 51st Highland Division.

The fate of one battalion, 7th Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, speaks for the heroism and sacrifice of British troops this day. By nightfall this Wednesday, they had lost nearly two dozen officers and 500 men, killed, wounded or missing. June 5 1940 was, the unit's war diarist noted that evening, "the blackest day in the history of the battalion".

Such sacrifice did not impress the irascible Maxime Weygand. As the 51st fell back in the face of overwhelming German pressure, the French generalissimo railed at the failure of the British troops and above all their leader for retreating. "Your general should be called Misfortune," he sneered at a British liaison officer.

Maxime Weygand had ordered his men to "hold fast to the soil of France without thought of retreat". Many did. But some did not.

After several days' rest, the assault troops of *7 Panzer Division* slipped across the Somme at first light on the fifth. Within four hours engineers had thrown a bridge across the river. By dusk, the armour had punched its way through ten miles of French-held territory. As he had done throughout the campaign in France, the division's dashing commander, one Erwin Rommel, never allowed the advance to slacken.

His armour avoided the roads wherever possible, ploughing through fields of tall corn or the meadows of the lower Somme valley. The panzers passed blazing petrol tankers, riderless horses, columns of prisoners – some of them drunk. In the June heat, the vehicles of *7 Panzer* trailed huge clouds of dust. "The enemy," Rommel reported to his masters as night fell, "has been torn apart."

His panzers were bound for the Seine at Rouen. So too the armour of his neighbouring division, *5 Panzer*. In doing so, they would cut off British and French troops in the Pays de Caux, the chalk plateau between the mouths of the Somme and the Seine. The encirclement of Allied forces at Dunkirk would be repeated – albeit on a smaller scale.

Instead of ordering a withdrawal behind the greatest of France's arteries, the only orders from an increasingly hysterical General Weygand were: hold on. "It's the decisive battle of the war," the French commander insisted. "Every man must stand and fight.

Each tank must become a fortress! Every man must attack!"

Cooler British heads realised the 51st Highlanders faced encirclement. Once again, the gaze of British generals in France turned to the Royal Navy.

In Semaphore Tower, the imposing naval base headquarters which dominated the Portsmouth waterfront, the offices of Admiral William James were buzzing.

To the Vice Admiral Dover had fallen the grave responsibility of evacuating the British Expeditionary Force at Dunkirk.

Along the south coast, orders had now been passed to the Commander-in-Chief Portsmouth for a new rescue mission, Operation Cycle: the evacuation of Allied troops on the Le Havre peninsula.

'Bubbles' James was not cut from the same cloth as his counterpart in Dover. Bertram Ramsay was an organiser. Admiral Sir William James was a leader of men in the more traditional sense. For more than a quarter of a century he had held commands, served as a flag officer or executive officer. When his career allowed, he delved into naval history, publishing numerous tomes. As for the nickname, that came from a painting by his grandfather of the five-year-old William entranced by a bubble he had just blown. The image was subsequently used to advertise Pears soap... hence the sobriquet, which the admiral detested.

Now, however was not the time to be entranced. James hurriedly gathered a staff of junior officers and merchant sailors to round up "an armada of vessels of all sorts and sizes". South coast ports were raided and an assortment of cross-Channel ferries, Dutch barges, yachts and pleasure cruisers, tugs and cutters, 200 in all were ready to sail for France by June 8, shepherded by a handful of destroyers. They set sail for Le Havre "in high heart".

By the time the Cycle force sailed, German troops already stood on the Seine. Erwin Rommel again. First at Elbeuf, a dozen miles upstream of Rouen, then at the great cathedral city. Every crossing of the Seine was gone – destroyed either by the French or by the Luftwaffe, which had pounded Rouen. The 12th-Century cathedral still stood, undamaged, as did many of the mediaeval buildings surrounding it. But elsewhere the city burned and the German soldiers looted abandoned French Army trucks. "Everything is free – like in a large department store," German staff officer Hans Meier-Welcker wrote. "Everything is searched by the troops and they take what they fancy – as long as they can carry it. They drag full bags of coffee from heavy goods vehicles, shirts, stockings, blankets, boots and countless other goods. What you have to save up for and pay a high price everywhere else, here you can pick it

up on the streets or on the ground."

As Rouen burned, so too the port of Le Havre at the mouth of the Seine. "The atmosphere was desolate," recalled F J G Hewitt, First Lieutenant of HMS Bulldog which had arrived in the Seine Bay ready to carry out Operation Cycle.

"Oil tanks were burning on shore with huge black clouds of smoke rising further inland.

"Nobody from shore seemed to take much notice of our arrival – the only information we gleaned was that the Army had lost touch with its forward units." Such chaos and indecision would characterise the evacuation.

Monday June 10 dawned with William James pacing his operations room in Portsmouth. His flotilla had reached French shores, but was still waiting for instructions to evacuate – command on the other side of the Channel rested with a French admiral... and the French admiral was flapping. Bubbles seized the initiative. He commandeered a motor torpedo boat – commanded by his son, although the admiral only realised it as the craft left harbour – and sped for France.

As the boat approached Le Havre, James could see the port's oil tanks still burning from a heavy air raid three days earlier. The air was shaken constantly by the sound of explosions – engineers were at work destroying the port installations.

Le Havre was home to a headquarters staff of more than 1,000 British troops. James struggled against a torrent of refugees to reach the HQ. On the wall, a huge chart revealed the plight of the Highlanders, now cut off. There was a constant stream of despatch riders coming and going. None brought good tidings. It was clear to the admiral that the 51st Division would never reach Le Havre. There was only one hope of extricating the Highlanders: the port of St Valéry-en-Caux, 40 miles up the coast.

St Valéry is no Dunkirk. It is no Le Havre. It is not even a Dieppe. It is a small fishing port of fewer than 5,000 souls, nestling between towering chalk cliffs. The harbour is small, its entrance, flanked by two piers, narrow. The beaches either side are small and strewn with pebbles. Only at low tide does the sand materialise. The only way to embark troops at St Valéry was using small craft; the harbour was too small for destroyers and transporters.

It was late afternoon by the time the first ships of Admiral James' flotilla, led by HMS Bulldog, arrived off St Valéry. A small rowing boat with half a dozen men dressed in khaki approached the destroyer. They clambered aboard Bulldog. In thick Scottish brogue, they told the ship's First Lieutenant they were men of the 51st Highland Division. They had 'borrowed' the boat... and intended to row to England.

As HMS Bulldog picked up a handful of Highlanders, Erwin Rommel's vanguard reached the coast at Les Petits Dalles, ten miles along the coast from St Valéry. "The engines and the rattle of tank tracks fall silent on the coast," one of Rommel's signallers wrote. "The marvellous coastal terrain and the sublime view of the Atlantic are, to us, the most wonderful reward." Panzer regiment commander *Oberst* (Colonel) Karl Rothenburg drove his Panzer Mk III through the sea wall and on to the beach, while his commander flashed a terse message to the rest of the division: *Am at sea*. A few months later, he described the moment:

The sight of the sea with the cliffs on both sides thrilled every man.

We climbed out of our vehicles and walked down the shingle beach to the water's edge until the water lapped at our boots. Several dispatch

riders, wearing long waterproof coats, walked straight out until the water was over their knees – I had to call them back.

The frolicking in the Channel was brief. The sight of a flotilla of 200 small and large ships off the Normandy coast quickly caught the eye of the Germans. Their guns engaged – and damaged – HMS Ambuscade. She fared better than two B-class destroyers ordered to close the French coast – Boadicea and Bulldog.

The former also came under enemy fire as she picked up four dozen British and French troops from the beach at Veulettes, five miles from St Valéry. As Bulldog moved in to support her sister, the two warships were bounced by nine Stukas.

The dive bombers split into two groups: three circled Boadicea, the rest focused their attention on Bulldog. Three bombs struck Bulldog, wrecking her steering gear and causing carnage in the boiler and engine rooms – even though one of the bombs did not explode. Boadicea suffered even graver damage. Two direct hits caused the loss of power and inflicted heavy casualties below decks. She would probably have sunk but for a blanket of fog which shrouded Norman shores. It prevented any further attacks by the Luftwaffe – and allowed Ambuscade to tow Boadicea back to Portsmouth.

Bulldog's engineers were able to restore power. She limped back to Portsmouth, where a bomb disposal expert from HMS Vernon was waiting for the ship. He made safe the unexploded bomb in the boiler room. The dive-bombers had released their 'eggs' too late; the timer on the fuses had not run out. It was a mistake Argentinian bombers would repeat four decades later...

By first light on June 11, the bulk of the Cycle force was mustering off St Valéry. Co-ordinating this disparate force was far from easy. Few of the vessels were fitted with radio. The persistent mist – which had saved the three destroyers the previous afternoon – rendered signalling by flags or even Aldis lamps useless. Megaphones were the last resort. Some skippers heard the instructions and closed to within sight of the port. Many did not.

To the travails caused by the elements were added the travails caused by man. William James was ordering his ships to evacuate the 51st. The Highlanders were demanding aerial support after constant hounding by German bombers. Whitehall refused to send it. It also refused to authorise an evacuation, determined to send the French government a signal that London would not desert its Allies. The men on the ground in St Valéry pressed ahead with plans for embarkation after dark on the 11th.

Just as in Dunkirk a fortnight earlier, morale and discipline in St Valéry were beginning to break down. "Thousands of drunken French soldiers were looting cafes, shops and houses, blazing away at anything with their rifles," one sergeant with the Seaforth Highlanders recalled.

As the *poilus* drank themselves into a stupor, *7 Panzer* spent the morning regrouping. Come mid-day, the armour rolled once more, bound for St Valéry.

They found their way blocked at Le Tot, 2½ miles outside St Valéry, by ferocious British resistance. While Rommel's infantry grappled with the hastily-constructed strongpoints, the panzers simply bypassed them and made for the cliffs overlooking the small port. From their lofty vantage point, the Germans could observe lively activity in St Valéry. "The French and British," wrote Hans von Luck, in command of a reconnaissance battalion, "seemed to be preparing for embarkation."

◆◆◆

After several hours in discussion with the Highlanders' commander Victor Fortune, Cdr Robert Elkins returned to the seafront to see how preparations for the evacuation with progressing. Elkins had been hurriedly dispatched to France to serve as the 51st's naval liaison officer. If there was indecision elsewhere, it did not extend to the naval commander who busied himself – and his small team – with plans for evacuation both from the harbour and from the small beaches. Word of the impending rescue had spread around St Valéry. There were now hundreds of French soldiers milling around on the small west beach, waiting either for salvation – or to surrender.

On the clifftop a soldier was waving frantically, urging the soldiers to down weapons and join him. Robert Elkins was suspicious. His suspicions were confirmed when he spied a German helmet and the barrel of a panzer peeking over the cliff. He grabbed a French rifle and ran down the pier, urging British troops on it to destroy all their secret equipment. Machine-guns raked the mole "but I was running very fast and they missed," Elkins recalled. However fast he ran, however, he could never reach the end of the pier alive. He threw himself behind granite boulders on the beach and contemplated his fate. "For half an hour he lay behind a pile of stones, pretending to be dead," Erwin Rommel wrote.

Pinned down on all sides, Elkins finally surrendered. He was taken to *7 Panzer's* staff, where one of Rommel's officers berated him for not giving up sooner, sparing the lives of many of the men on the mole. "Would you have acted any differently in my position?" he snapped back.

Erwin Rommel was rather more gracious than his staff. He sent for a bottle of wine and shared it with Robert Elkins before the latter joined more than one thousand French and British soldiers captured by *7 Panzer Division* this day.

Despite this large-scale surrender, St Valéry was far from captured. The Germans held only part of the small port on the western side of harbour. There were still thousands of Allied troops in the heart of town and in the port – and they planned to escape.

Under a white flag, Rommel sent negotiators into St Valéry: surrender or face an all-out assault at 9pm. The calls fell on deaf ears. "It was mainly the British who turned down all suggestions to surrender," Rommel wrote. "They had their men heavily engaged building barricades and moving large numbers of guns and machine-guns into position around St Valéry."

Back in Semaphore Tower, a flurry of desperate signals from the 51st was handed to William James: *Situation critical. When can we expect boats? Running short of ammunition*. And finally, at dusk on the 11th, a terse plea: *Consider tonight last possible chance of evacuation of 51 Division*. Twenty-four thousand men – half of them British, half of them French – needed rescuing.

Admiral James responded with a pledge to extricate the Highlanders: *Evacuation from St Valéry is to commence this evening. All available transports are being sent*.

At 9pm, as promised, *7 Panzer* began its bombardment of St Valéry, directing its onslaught first at the pier, then at the town itself. "The effect," wrote Rommel, "was especially devastating." To the east of St Valéry, *5 Panzer* was compounding the misery of the trapped Allied troops, squeezing the ever-shrinking pocket. The besieged forces defended doggedly. "Each house has to be taken individually," a German war correspondent wrote. "Each wall is a nest of enemy resistance." But it was an ill-matched struggle. The headquarters of *5 Panzer* intercepted a radio message

from British troops broadcast *en clair*: *To our left artillery, to our right tanks. This is the end!*

After dark on June 11, thousands of British soldiers made for the beach and harbour at St Valéry, awaiting deliverance. Fog and mist turned at times to drizzle. The buildings around the harbour burned in the wake of Rommel's bombardment. Tracer from German machine-guns occasionally flashed across the harbour, striking the quays and pier.

Into this hell sailed the tug *Fairplay* towing several drifters. In the glow of the fires, the flotilla quickly came under attack from German mortars and machine-guns. Two drifters were sunk. The rest abandoned the rescue mission and turned for home waters.

Not so the destroyers *Codrington* and *Saladin*, observing proceedings in the small port. Their captains had watched the flotilla of drifters move in. They had seen the hail of steel poured down on the small craft and drawn the obvious conclusion: St Valéry was a death trap. The force moved four miles along the coast to Veules-les-Roses where things were much quieter.

Half a dozen craft reached Veules. Over the next six hours they embarked 1,200 Britons waiting on the shore, plus some 900 Frenchmen. When the guns of *5 Panzer Division* found the range of the ships, they set sail.

It wasn't just the Germans who had seen the armada mustered off Veules. The men of the 51st, who had waited on the beach and in the harbour of St Valéry, also observed the activity. Some decided to ignore orders and seek salvation. Capt Derek Lang of the Cameron Highlanders, accompanied by "a number of Jocks" struggled along the shoreline. The foot of the cliffs was littered with corpses – desperate soldiers had tried to climb or abseil down the sheer faces to reach the waiting ships. When Lang reached Veules he found a solitary "large trawler-type fishing boat" run aground on the sand. "A seething mass of human beings" had forced their way aboard the Hebe 2, a Dutch coaster, hoping that the tide would carry her out. The Germans proved faster than Nature. They soon appeared on the cliff top and began shooting at the stranded vessel.

Elbeuf-en-Bray, June 12 1940

At various places fires rage, and there is almost continuous crashing and banging from ammunition exploding in burning vehicles.

As I could go no further because of enemy roadblocks and mines not yet cleared, I drove south to St Valéry. On the roads leading there all the English and French vehicles were packed together: vast quantities.

In the harbour at St Valéry French and English were wandering around who had not yet been "officially" captured...I drove through this strange crowd roving around.

Only a few French and English generals had been separated somewhat. A large part of the town was on fire or had already burned down. Some inhabitants wandered around.

On the return trip I passed a village, which was still held by the enemy. On the country road entire packs of horses moved, the remnants of a French cavalry division.

– Hans Meier-Welcker

"We climbed out of our vehicles and walked down the shingle beach to the water's edge. The sight of the sea thrilled every man."

– Generalmajor Erwin Rommel

"My last moments before capture were spent firing a Lewis gun – which was fixed to the side of this boat – at these tanks," Lang recalled. "Quite a forlorn hope."

The white flag was now flying over St Valéry. French troops had hoisted it. They had orders to cease fighting – although they hadn't had the courtesy to tell the British.

Victor Fortune was already in a foul mood. His men had spent "all night on [the] beach" waiting for ships which never came. Now a note was handed to him by the senior French officer in the town, *Général* Marcel Ihler: *Le feu cessera à huit heures* – Cease firing at 8am. Fortune intended to fight on; he still had hopes that the Royal Navy might rescue the remnants of his division. The matter was beyond his control. The white flag on the steeple was followed by white flags throughout the port as the *poilus* laid down their arms and Rommel's tanks had entered the edge of town. There was no hope of defending St Valéry-en-Caux any longer.

Frenchmen and Britons, officers and other ranks, all converged on the market square where a formal, if not orderly, surrender was conducted. One British general – Victor Fortune – and four French commanders surrendered to Erwin Rommel. One French general buttonholed the German commander. Which division had captured them? Rommel told him it was the 7 *Panzer*.

"Damn it!" snapped the Frenchman. "The ghost division!" He explained that his unit had been chased across France and Belgium by Rommel's men. "We've repeatedly run into this division, wandering all over France like a ghost." The nickname stuck.

At least 12,000 men, 4,000 of them British, fell into Rommel's hands at

St Valéry. "What was particularly surprising was the sang froid with which the British officers accepted their fate," the German general wrote. Despite their predicament Fortune, and especially his staff, joked and laughed – although they did not appreciate the intrusions of a propaganda film crew accompanying Rommel's division. The senior captives were invited to dine with their captors at an open-air lunch. They declined. Rather less civility was shown the ordinary soldiers. At Veules-les-Roses, Gerhard Starcke of 31 *Panzer Regiment* – *Roten Teufel* (Red Devils) – watched thousands of British and French prisoners being marched away. "They have not merely thrown away their weapons, their also disarmed inwardly as well," he wrote.

"Many are wounded, their uniforms torn." A corporal who had tried in vain to swim to one of the waiting Cycle ships filed past Starcke dejected. "The Red Devils are hell," he muttered.

And so ends the story of the 51st Highland Division in France. "It was a terrible disappointment," William James wrote a decade later. Dynamo had been distinguished by supreme organisation, courage, determination and luck. Cycle was remarkable only for smatterings of courage and determination. You could blame the mist. You could blame the Germans. You could blame Whitehall. Admiral James chose to blame the French for this "wretched affair"; they had dithered and consistently refused to allow any evacuation. By the time permission came, St Valéry was surrounded.

The end of the Highlanders was not the end of the evacuations from France. As the 51st marched into captivity, 40 miles away in Le Havre, thousands of British troops were being embarked, largely

on steamers and ferries. More than 11,000 men were rescued – the last overnight on June 12-13. The next day, German troops marched into the port. They found the oil tanks around the harbour in flames, the cranes and quayside installations smashed, and the streets filled with abandoned British trucks and cars, most undamaged, ready to be loaded on ships which never came. Civilians looted crates of raincoats, stole cushions from cars, drained petrol from vehicles. In short, anything not nailed down ended up in a Frenchman's home.

For the soldiers who'd escaped Le Havre, salvation was short-lived. Within hours, 9,000 of them were back on French soil, dropped in Cherbourg across the Seine Bay to continue the struggle.

But for how much longer? French resistance had collapsed. Rommel's panzers – on the move again towards Calvados and the Cotentin peninsula – was scything through Normandy. "I can't believe there'll be any more serious fighting," the general wrote to his wife. "People are glad that for them, the war is over. We've even been presented with flowers by the roadside in some places." The Battle of France, 7 *Panzer's* commander observed, had turned into "a lightning tour of France". The lanes of Calvados were "strewn with destroyed guns, with ammunition and steel helmets, with foreign clothes and letters," German soldier Bernd Hardeweg wrote. He continued:

Bottles lay there, half consumed. Household goods. Dogs shot. Horses with bloated stomachs, stinking. Curtains hung on telephone poles. Like fog, the smell of fuel hung over the road. A dead person lay with her face turned down, doll-like in death. The tiny hand

was stretched out pointlessly into the flowery grass. She was yellow like wax and reached for something.

There was a mass grave next to a bomb crater, Frenchmen covered with earth in a hurry. Armoured cars, motorcycles, guns, machine-guns, shell cases, cartridges, ammunition. Ruined, done in, abandoned – a picture of appalling collapse.

Indeed France's war was nearly over. On June 14, German troops marched into Paris. The following day, they launched an all-out assault on the Maginot Line. That same day the Admiralty took a momentous decision. It would bring the rest of the British Expeditionary Force home. Operation Aerial, as it was codenamed, demanded planning – and evacuation – on a scale comparable with Dunkirk. It succeeded. And it is largely forgotten, save for one tragedy.

After the exertions of Operation Cycle, which had been such a disappointment, William James found his burden lessened somewhat when it came to executing Aerial. He only had to rescue troops from Cherbourg and St Malo. James emptied the ports of soldiers quickly – and none too soon. Late on the afternoon of June 15, seven Ju88s appeared over the latter harbour with orders to wreak havoc. Pilot Peter Stahl watched his comrades attack, before beginning his own dive against the warehouses on the quayside. He ignored the anti-aircraft shells exploding all around his dive-bomber – the smell of burnt cordite filled the cockpit – and carried out a textbook attack against his target. As the bombs were released and the Ju88 pulled out of its dive – exerting four to five Gs on the crew – Stahl's dorsal gunner

yelled with delight: *Volltreffer* – bull's eye. Peter Stahl turned his aircraft for home, away from the setting sun, overjoyed that his first operational sortie had been a success.

Despite Peter Stahl's elation, the Luftwaffe's attacks on Cherbourg achieved little. William James succeeded in arranging the rescue of 30,630 men from the port at the tip of the Cotentin peninsula "without the loss of a single life or damage to a single ship" the official historian noted proudly. The evacuation of St Malo was no less successful – or bloodless. A further 21,474 troops were lifted off, thanks in part to the umbrella the RAF provided, keeping German bombers at bay.

A far more onerous task fell to William James' counterpart in Plymouth, Martin Dunbar-Nasmith. The Commander-in-Chief of the Western Approaches was a legendary figure who owed his popular fame not to a soap advert but deeds in battle. In command of submarine HMS E11, he had been the scourge of the Marmara, negotiating the hazardous Dardanelles to target Turkish shipping. Which he did, seemingly with impunity. It earned him the VC. A generation later, the poacher turned gamekeeper. It was now his task to keep submarines at bay and safeguard shipping in the Western Approaches.

For now, all thoughts of prosecuting the U-boat war were put on hold. Dunbar-Nasmith was to muster what shipping he could and evacuate troops from Brest, St Nazaire and La Pallice.

Dunbar-Nasmith rounded up liners and troopships and sent them across the Channel, protected by destroyers and minesweepers.

The evacuation of Brest was a rather hurried if successful affair. By nightfall on June 17, more than 32,000

troops, many of them RAF personnel, had been picked up by several large troopships, including the former liners *Arandora Star* and *Otranto*. Convinced the great Brittany port was about to fall to the panzers, the evacuation was halted. Brest did not fall for another two days.

And still French soil was not devoid of Tommies. There were anywhere between 40,000 and 60,000 Commonwealth troops strung out along the Loire, making their way for the estuary. When they reached St Nazaire, they waited in an orderly fashion in the port's basin for smaller craft – warships, tugs, drifters, small ferries – to carry them out to the half a dozen or so liners and troopships waiting three or four miles offshore in Quiberon Bay.

The evacuation began promisingly. More than 12,000 troops embarked on a quartet of liners and steamers in the bay.

In the midst of this bustle arrived two former Cunard liners – the 'ia' at the end of their names immediately revealed their owner's identity. The 20,000-ton *Franconia* and the slightly older – and smaller – *Lancastria* had both been converted into troopships, and had both brought troops safely home from Norway in the wake of the German advance through Scandinavia.

As a French trawler guided the transporters past the island of Belle-Ile-en-Mer, a single Junkers 88 – by far the best German bomber of the day – made for the liners. Its bombs fell astern of the *Franconia*. They landed close enough to lift her out of the water, knocking out one of her engines. After temporary repairs, she returned to Liverpool. Not so the *Lancastria*. She dropped anchor in the roadstead.

Continued on page iv



● *Général* Marcel Ihler (wearing a distinctive kepi) surrenders to Erwin Rommel in St Valéry on June 12 1940. The ill-starred 51st Highland Division's commander General Victor Fortune is on the right of the photograph



● (Above) Le Havre burns after a German air raid and (below) the fishing port of St Valéry-en-Caux ablaze following a bombardment by 7 *Panzer* Division



Continued from page vii

Peter Stahl was over the Loire this Sunday afternoon, but a good 150 miles from activities in Quiberon Bay. He had orders to smash the crossings over the river in the city of Tours. He needed two passes of the bridge – on the first dive Stahl’s payload failed to release. Not so on the second. *Volltreffer*. He returned to his base convinced the bridge was useless. The fliers celebrated their success with a “serious drinking session” in a Belgian inn.

RAF armourer Ted Mansfield arrived in a truck on the edge of St Nazaire. For a month, the 19-year-old had lived a transitory existence supporting Fairey Battle bombers of the British Air Forces in France – the RAF counterpart of the British Expeditionary Force. The BAFF, like the BEF, was pulling out of France. Mansfield and his colleagues rendered their trucks and their weapons useless, then moved towards the docks. They spent the night sleeping under the eaves of the quayside warehouses. “All night long ack-ack guns were firing and shrapnel was ‘raining down’ on the warehouse roof, making a terrible noise,” the ground crewman recalled. “It did not bother us – we were so tired we slept through it all.”

Sunday June 16 had turned to Monday 17 by the time the voice of *Maréchal* Philippe Pétain crackled out of French radio sets. Just hours before the 84-year-old marshal, saviour of Verdun a generation earlier, had been asked to form a new government in Bordeaux, to where the nation’s politicians had fled when Paris was threatened. For his age, Pétain’s voice was far from infirm, but his words were hurried. He spoke for barely 90 seconds – reading the 203 words of a prepared statement. The *poilu* had fought “avec un héroïsme digne de ses longues traditions militaires contre un ennemi supérieur en nombre et en armes” – with heroism worthy of his long military traditions against a foe superior in number and arms. But the *poilu* could fight no longer. “My heart trembles when I tell you today that we must end the struggle.”

First light this Monday found upwards of three dozen vessels either at anchor or under way in the Loire estuary. Her Majesty’s Troopship Lancastria was at anchor, a dozen miles from St Nazaire. A Royal Naval officer moved among the flotilla in a launch, outlining the plan of evacuation for the day. In her heyday, the liner had been built to carry 2,200 passengers. Her captain, Rudolph Sharp, was prepared to raise that figure to 3,000. The naval officer shook his head. “We were told to take as many troops aboard as could be loaded, without regard to the limits laid down by international law,” Sharp’s first officer, Harry Grattidge, recalled. Grattidge was perturbed – and not just by the officer’s seemingly cavalier attitude to maritime safety. The sky, he noted, “throbbed with planes”. The planes were British – the RAF was flying near-constant patrols over the St Nazaire roadstead.

The Loire throbbed with boats. Since dawn, a stream of smaller vessels had either been heading into or out of St Nazaire to collect waiting troops. A round-trip to the larger merchantmen and liners at anchor took upwards. By 6.30am, the first weary men filed aboard the Lancastria. To them, the 16,000-ton ship looked tired and old – but her size suggested she was solid, secure, safe.

In the docks at St Nazaire, NAAFI canteen employee Frank Clements was looking to barter. The 30-year-old, serving in brand-new destroyer

HMS Highlander – requisitioned by the Admiralty from Brazil just two days into the war – was a keen amateur photographer who ‘circumvented’ regulations and took his camera wherever he went. The evacuation was an event begging to be photographed for posterity, but Clements had no film left. In port, he bumped into a sailor willing to exchange film for a pair of socks from Highlander’s NAAFI.

It was mid-day by the time most Germans learned that France was suing for peace. Peter Stahl and his comrades had barely recovered from the previous evening’s heavy drinking session when news reached them. “This calls for another celebration,” the pilot decided.

According to the day’s menu, lunch aboard the Lancastria was a grand affair: hors d’œuvre of consommé, crab salad or fried fillet of cod; a main course of steak or perhaps veal and bacon in a parsley sauce, accompanied by potatoes and beans, or perhaps a cold buffet; dessert of apricot flan or ice cream, and finally cheese, biscuits and coffee.

Few of the rescued troops remember such a spread being served. They do remember the Lancastria being crammed, her holds filled with camp beds and straw mattresses. Ted Mansfield was given a blanket, sent below and told to find somewhere to sleep. He did.

“It was pretty grim down there,” recalled Cpl Donald Draycott, serving with 98 Sqn RAF. “Having a strong sense of preservation, I thought if we got attacked, we wouldn’t have a chance down there.” He remained on deck.

First Officer Harry Grattidge struggled through the crowded passageways against a torrent of soldiers, stumbling over kit bags and helmets. At the shell door in the liner’s side through which the rescued troops came aboard, Grattidge found Lancastria’s purser. How many souls were aboard, he inquired. At least 5,000 men, the purser responded. “I was horrified,” wrote Grattidge. “Five thousand men already embarked when our normal capacity was three thousand.” He ordered the doors closed and told the arriving vessels to make for the neighbouring troopship, the Oronsay. Lancastria would take no more men.

She could, however, accommodate a few civilians. A tug approached the liner with a handful of dishevelled refugees, including a brother and sister, no older than ten, clinging on to a golden retriever “and a disreputable mongrel”.

“We can’t have those dogs aboard,” the First Officer told the children. “You’ll have to leave them on the tug.” The youngsters looked at him blankly. An Englishwoman intervened and translated on the sailor’s behalf. The children’s eyes welled up. The children had walked all the way from Brussels. Their pets had walked with them. They were inseparable. Harry Grattidge buckled. He ignored quarantine regulations and allowed the dogs aboard.

The reports of concentrations of shipping in the Loire estuary filtered back to the headquarters of *Fliegerkorps IV* – IV Air Corps. From there they were passed to *Kampfgeschwader 30* – 30th Bomber Squadron – and finally to its *II Gruppe* – 2nd Wing. At 2pm on June 17, 14 Ju88s carrying 250 and 500kg bombs lifted off from Le Culot airfield in Belgium and made for Quiberon Bay. Among the fliers was Peter Stahl. His celebrations of victory over France had been cut short.

The first German bombers appeared over the Loire estuary shortly before 2pm. They aimed for a large ship

with two funnels, the Oronsay – from 12,000 feet she looked the biggest target.

“Sometimes the afternoon sun caught their wings in a fine flash of scintillating light,” Harry Grattidge observed on Lancastria’s bridge. He and Capt Sharp followed the bombers’ progress as they swooped on the Oronsay.

“Every so often came the sharp-edged snarl of a bomb, the rocking explosion, the fountains of spray that splattered our decks like spring rain,” Grattidge recalled. After several of these near-misses, the Germans hit the Oronsay’s bridge, killing several of her crew.

On the bridge wing of destroyer HMS Havelock an Aldis lamp flashed furiously. The instructions were simple: set sail for England. Rudolph Sharp signalled back. He wanted a destroyer escort. None could be given.

Lancastria’s captain decided to wait till Oronsay had effected repairs – safety in numbers. His first officer agreed and returned to his cabin “mortally tired”. Try as he might, Grattidge could not sleep. “I had a sixth sense of impending disaster,” he remembered.

After an “endless” flight across northern and western France, the 14 Junkers 88s of *II/KG30* found “an enormous fleet of merchant ships of all sizes spread across the wide river estuary”. Peter Stahl aimed his bomber towards “a fat freighter”, trying to ignore the “ferocious flak” and French Morane fighters buzzing over the mouth of the Loire. One jumped on Stahl’s tail. “There’s no time to think about the finer details of dive-bombing,” the pilot wrote. “I throw the Ju88 on its nose and dive down.” The French fighter followed. The bomber gained speed. 370mph. 420mph. Bombs away. The Junkers banked sharply, staying out of the reach of anti-aircraft guns. The French fighter struggled to follow.

The Lancastria rocked. Ted Mansfield woke up. A soldier told him not worry. “Nothing son, go back to sleep.” A near-miss evidently.

In his cabin, Harry Grattidge listened “to the longest, most fearful silence I had ever heard”. Then the sound of bombs falling again “so fast that it ripped at your eardrums. Four times the Lancastria bucked and shuddered like an animal in pain.”

Ted Mansfield did not need to ask his comrades in khaki what had happened. Lancastria had been hit. The liner rolled first to port, then to starboard. Alarm bells were ringing. The loudspeaker ordered abandon ship. Men struggled to make their way topside.

On the bridge Rudolph Sharp and Harry Grattidge struggled to comprehend the carnage. One bomb had landed in No.2 hold, home to perhaps 800 RAF personnel. Another had possibly gone down Lancastria’s funnel. One had certainly exploded in No.3 hold, causing 500 tons of fuel oil to gush out.

Then the smoke drifted and parted and we saw the mess of blood and oil and splintered woodwork that littered the deck and the furious white core of water that came roaring from the bottom of the ship in No.4 hold.

There was confusion, but no panic on Lancastria’s upper decks, RAF corporal Donald Draycott remembered. Indeed, he even passed an Army NCO still trying to fight the fires. “You’ve had it chum!” he told him. “You’re wasting your time!”

By the time Ted Mansfield reached

Lancastria’s upper deck, the liner was listing heavily – much of her port side was already under water. There was little hope of swinging out the lifeboats. Mansfield sat down and determined to jump off the sinking ship when the right moment came. For the next few minutes he watched the German bombers continue their attack, strafing men struggling to cling on to debris in the oily water.

Lancastria’s bridge was also raked by machine-gun fire. The bullets bounced off the now-useless telegraphs. By now, just 20 minutes after the first bomb struck, the water was almost lapping the bridge.

“It’s time now, Harry,” Capt Sharp told his first officer. The two men stepped off the bridge into the ocean and swam for it.

Ted Mansfield had also decided it was “time to get off”. He removed his boots and walked down the side of the foundering liner. “I could see men through the portholes, but was unable to help them in any way, knowing that they were soon to perish,” he remembered.

Harry Grattidge felt he was swimming through “cold black syrup”. He held on to a spar to keep his head above water. Over the tumult of men and women thrashing in the water, muffled explosions, the rattle of machine-guns, he heard the beautiful voice of a tenor. *There’ll always be an England...* Other survivors heard men singing *Roll out the Barrel* and, more fittingly, *Abide With Me*. “For a while the side of the hull remained above water with hundreds of men sitting on it, singing lustily before they floated off,” recalled Lt J P Mosse in HMS Highlander.

Such stoicism was soon replaced by an indescribable sound of horror rolling across the bay as the liner disappeared beneath the waves and the hundreds still trapped below decks screamed.

As the Lancastria died, HMS Highlander and anti-submarine trawler HMS Cambridgeshire moved in to pick up survivors. Frank Clements seized his camera and began recording the rescue mission.

Ted Mansfield struggled into an abandoned launch. A sailor took charge of it, towing a lifeboat. The two craft moved among the survivors, hauling them out of the water, until the launch was full and the lifeboat was low in the water. The two craft made for HMS Highlander.

Frank Clements had put down his camera to help rescue Lancastria’s passengers aboard his destroyer. He saw soldiers in the water struggling in the oil, weighed down by their kit and their rifles. The NAAFI man called on the troops to ditch their equipment. Some did. Many did not. They drowned. Clements did succeed in rescuing a baby girl, who slipped out of her mother’s arms and fell back into the sea.

Harry Grattidge was picked up by a French rowing boat and taken first to a destroyer, then to the Oronsay, from where he helped direct the rescue mission. For the rest of the day, boats brought survivors aboard the troopship. Many were horribly burned.

There were burned survivors aboard HMS Highlander too. And scores of men who had swallowed oil. The living were transferred to the Oronsay, the dead were sewn into bags or hammocks and committed to the deep after dark. One of Highlander’s crew rubbed down an oil-covered Ted Mansfield. The RAF man was given a duffle coat – he was feeling cold, despite it being a fine summer’s day – and a

hot mug of tea.

After a few minutes, the overloaded destroyer manoeuvred alongside the Oronsay, a plank bridged the gap between the two vessels, and the survivors ran across. Not all made it. Some men slipped off the gangway. They were never recovered.

Aboard the troopship, Ted Mansfield was offered another mug of tea and, best of all, a large corned beef sandwich – his first food in ages.

Having been pursued by a French fighter, Peter Stahl had no chance to observe the impact of his bombs on the evacuation fleet. Back at his airfield in Belgium, he conferred with fellow pilots. They agreed they’d scored “numerous good hits” on the ships. The men resumed the celebrations interrupted by the day’s mission, while their commander reported the successes to the Luftwaffe High Command. *KG30*’s daily report describes “two hits by 500kg bombs on a fully-laden transporter entering the Loire estuary. Transporter similar to a battleship, around 30,000 tonnes. The stern flew into the air, the ship capsized.”

Ted Mansfield was one of 2,477 people rescued from the Lancastria. At the time she was bombed, there were at least 6,000 souls aboard. Some reports suggest the figure was nearer to 7,000. Whatever the toll that Monday, the loss of the Lancastria remains the worst maritime disaster in British history. The Belgian children Harry Grattidge had allowed on board died. So too had their dogs.

The survivors of the Lancastria arrived in Plymouth the following afternoon. Ten ships arrived in Devon from the Loire that day. They delivered 23,000 men, women and children.

French soil was now all but empty of British troops and British citizens. Operation Aerial, however, continued. There were Poles to rescue from the Continent. Czechs. Belgians. Frenchmen. There were civilians to save from the Channel Islands – with the surrounding coast occupied by the Germans, the Admiralty decreed there was no way of guaranteeing the islands’ liberty.

Aerial continued until the very last day of fighting – June 25, when the Franco-German armistice came into effect. By the time it concluded, the Royal Navy had overseen the rescue of 191,870 Servicemen, 144,000 of them Britons. In all, the concerted efforts to evacuate the British Expeditionary Force – Operations Dynamo, Aerial and Cycle – saved 558,000 fighting men, two in every three of them British. Perhaps as many as 40,000 civilians were also rescued. Dynamo, the ‘Dunkirk spirit’, are shining beacons in British history. Aerial and Cycle were also successful, improvised operations. They have all but been forgotten.

The loss of the Lancastria was deliberately ‘forgotten’. When news of the tragedy reached Churchill’s ear, the premier forbade publication. “The newspapers have got quite enough disaster for today,” he determined. He would lift the ban when affairs did not seem so bleak “but events crowded upon us so black and so quickly that I forgot”.

On June 25th, a strange figure appeared at Semaphore Tower in Portsmouth. Wearing the dress of a French fisherman was one Cdr Robert Elkins. He and a Gordon Highlander had slipped away from the column of prisoners and made for the coast on foot and bicycle. “After many adventures” the pair of fugitives stole an 18ft boat from the village of Lion-sur-Mer, north of Caen, reaching Hayling Island 36 hours later.

What Winston Churchill tried to hide, Nature was determined to reveal. For weeks after the sinking, the Atlantic deposited bodies on the shores of the Pays de la Loire. At least 120 corpses were washed up on the beaches of La Bernerie-en-Retz, a good 15 miles from the spot where the Lancastria went down. Frenchmen – or their German overlords – ensured the dead were buried with full military honours.

“These soldiers that you’ve taken to their final resting place fought for their country with the same courage you have fought for ours and our Führer,” one German officer told a burial detail. “A nation which honours the dead is a great nation.”

News of the Lancastria tragedy finally appeared in British newspapers on July 26 – one day after the *New York Sun* had published Frank Clements’ images of the liner’s final moments. On his return to English soil, the NAAFI employee either gave or sold prints of the photographs he had taken on June 17 to a man in a pub; the images were subsequently sold to the newspaper. They remain the only photographic record of the Lancastria’s demise.

For the men of the 51st Highland Division, a towering slab of Scottish granite dominates the eastern clifftops above St Valéry, a monument to their sacrifice.

The dead of the Lancastria – those who were not entombed in the ship – were buried in at least two dozen cemeteries around the Loire estuary. It was nearly 50 years before they were formally recognised with a huge piece of granite, engraved in gold, mounted on a stone plinth on the St Nazaire seafront overlooking the liner’s last resting place. “We have not forgotten,” the inscription declares resolutely.

Written by Richard Hargreaves. With thanks to Pam Mansfield for her father-in-law’s account of the Lancastria disaster, the staff of the National Archives, Kew, the Imperial War Museum, London, and the Bundesarchiv, Freiburg-im-Breisgau. In addition, the following books, documents and internet sources have been used:

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● **Soldiers sit on the upturned hull of the Lancastria as the liner sinks off St Nazaire – as photographed by NAAFI employee Frank Clements aboard HMS Highlander**

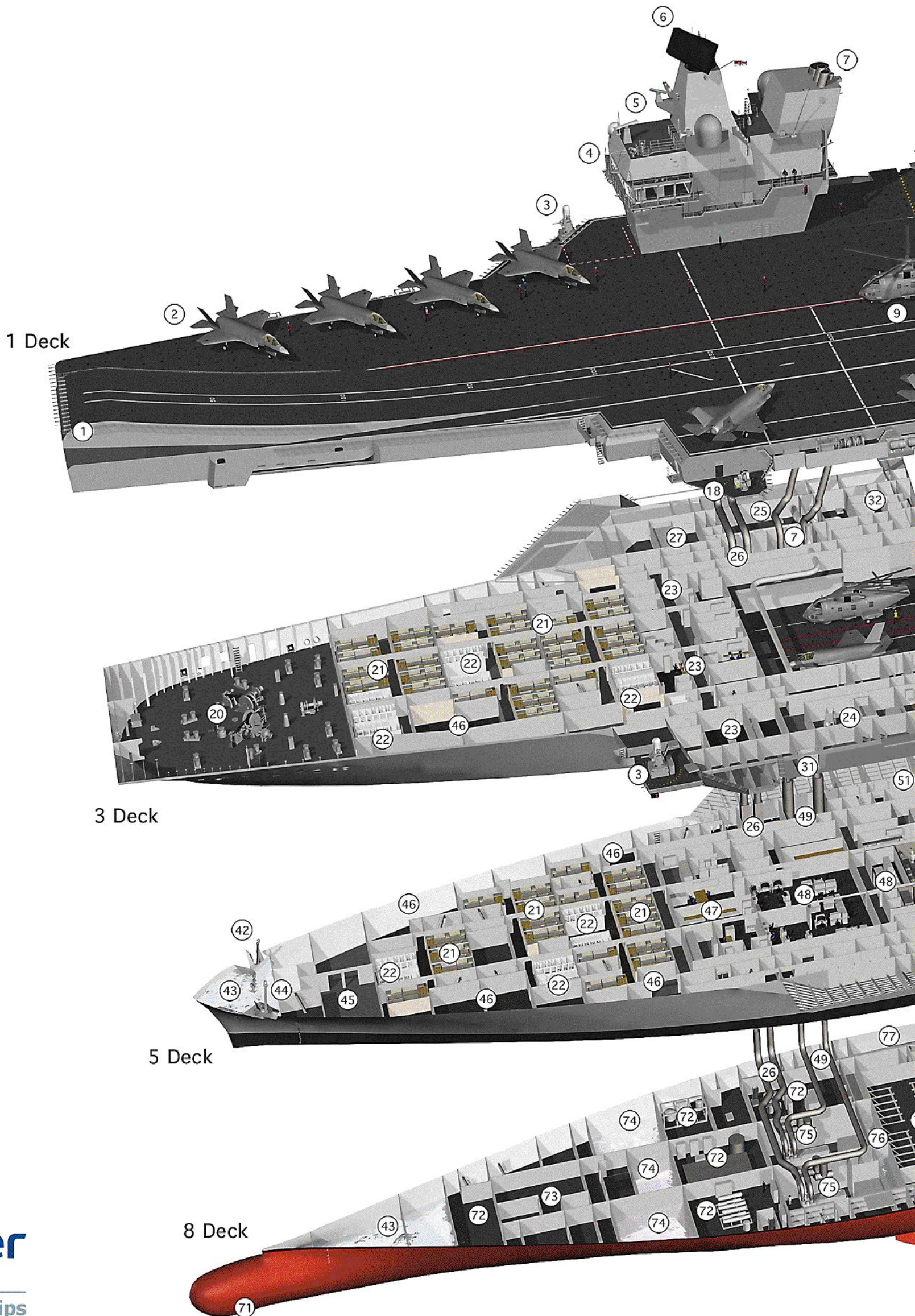


inside **HMS QUEEN ELIZABETH**

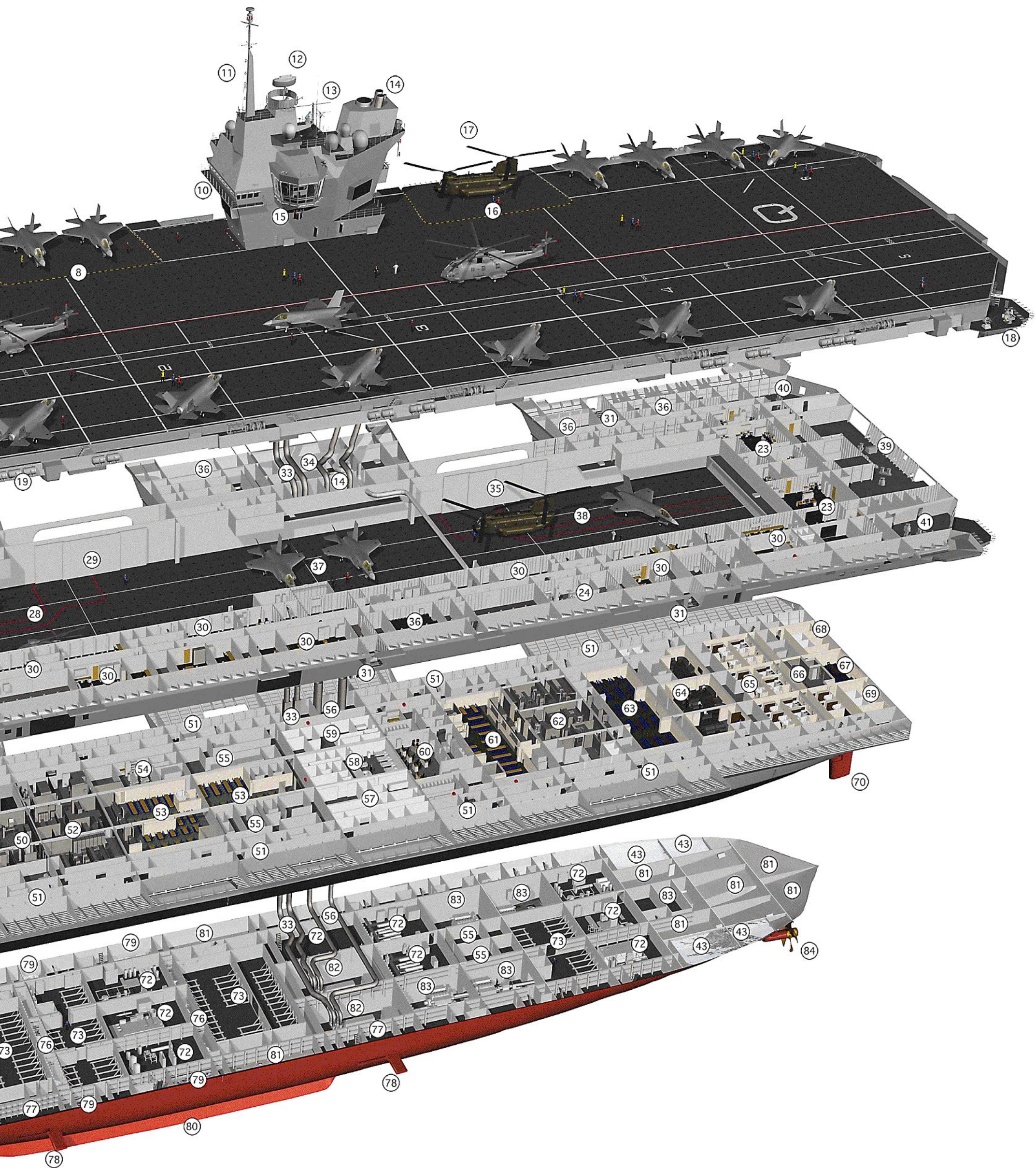
Turn the page for a stunning cutaway diagram



- 1 Aviation store
- 2 F35 Lightning II
- 3 Phalanx automated close-in weapons system
- 4 Forward island bridge
- 5 Navigation radar
- 6 Long range radar
- 7 Forward engine and gas turbine uptakes
- 8 Forward aircraft lift
- 9 Merlin helicopter
- 10 After island emergency conning bridge
- 11 Mainmast
- 12 Medium range radar
- 13 Communication outfit
- 14 After engine room and gas turbine uptakes
- 15 Flying control position
- 16 After aircraft lift
- 17 Chinook helicopter
- 18 Automatic small calibre gun
- 19 Inflatable life-raft stowage
- 20 Forward mooring deck
- 21 Junior rates' six-berth cabins
- 22 Junior rates' showers and toilets
- 23 Ship's office complex
- 24 Pyrolysis compartment
- 25 Forward gas turbine space
- 26 Forward engine down-takes
- 27 Fire protection system
- 28 Hangar forward bay
- 29 Forward hangar doors
- 30 Air squadron complex
- 31 Mass evacuation system
- 32 RN police office and cells
- 33 After engine down-takes
- 34 After gas turbine space
- 35 After hangar doors
- 36 Air filtration units
- 37 Hangar mid bay
- 38 Hangar aft bay
- 39 Aft mooring deck
- 40 Starboard mooring deck
- 41 Port mooring deck
- 42 Anchor (port and starboard)
- 43 Water ballast compartment
- 44 Chain locker trunk
- 45 Gym
- 46 Junior rates' recreation space
- 47 Mission systems office
- 48 Mission systems complex
- 49 Forward engine room uptakes
- 50 Bakery
- 51 Pipe passage
- 52 Junior rates' galley
- 53 Junior rates' dining hall
- 54 NAAFI canteen spaces
- 55 Low voltage distribution compartment
- 56 After engine room uptakes
- 57 Hospital area
- 58 Ward area
- 59 General medical area
- 60 HQ1 and ship control centre
- 61 Senior rates' dining hall
- 62 Officers' and senior rates' galley
- 63 Wardroom
- 64 Wardroom annexe
- 65 Head of department cabins
- 66 Flag and commanding officers' galley
- 67 Flag officer and commanding officers' dining room
- 68 Commanding officer's suite
- 69 Flag officer's suite
- 70 Rudder (port and starboard)
- 71 Bulbous bow
- 72 Auxiliary machinery space
- 73 Naval stores complex
- 74 Avcat tank
- 75 Forward engine room
- 76 Fresh water tanks
- 77 Stabiliser compartment (port and starboard)
- 78 Stabiliser (port and starboard)
- 79 Heel correction tank (port and starboard)
- 80 Bilge keel
- 81 Void
- 82 After engine room
- 83 Officers' baggage store
- 84 Propeller (port and starboard)



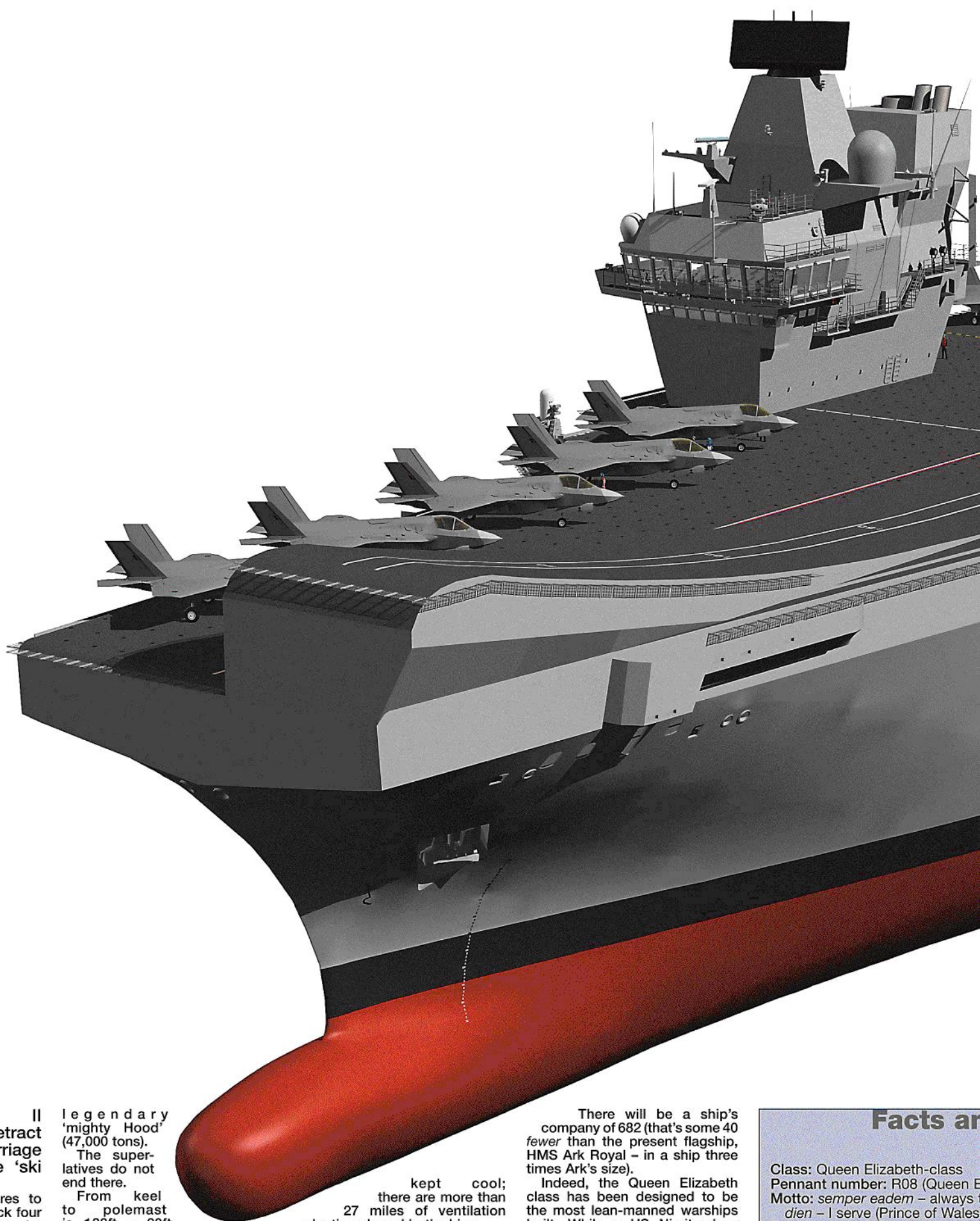
QUEEN ELIZABETH



aircraft carrier alliance

Delivering the Nation's Flagships

insideHMS



ALIGHTNING II prepares to retract its undercarriage after lifting from the 'ski ramp'.

Aft another F35 prepares to touch down on a flight deck four acres in size, observed by the crew of a Merlin helicopter and by the controllers in the purpose-built flying control 'tower' on the carrier's aft superstructure.

In the very near future, Her Majesty's Ship Queen Elizabeth and her sibling Prince of Wales will be the cornerstone of the Royal Navy's carrier strike force, the most capable and potent surface ships ever built in Britain, able to rise to the widest range of challenges around the globe.

The two carriers will be the largest vessels to raise the White Ensign.

At 65,000 tons they dwarf either post-war battleship HMS Vanguard (51,000 tons) or the

legendary 'mighty Hood' (47,000 tons).

The superlatives do not end there.

From keel to polemast is 183ft – 20ft taller than Nelson's column. The ships will be the length of 28 London double-decker buses.

Upon completion there will be more than 16 million square feet of paintwork – that's bigger than Hyde Park.

The flight deck is the size of 60 tennis courts (or almost three football pitches), while there's space for 18 tennis courts in the hangar. It can accommodate up to 20 F35s, or six Chinooks.

The combat systems on board are served by 197 miles of cable – which would stretch from London to Liverpool.

All that hi-tech kit needs to be

kept cool; there are more than 27 miles of ventilation ducting aboard both ships.

In the passageways are more than 1,300 miles of electrical cabling (enough to stretch from London to the northern Norwegian city of Tromsø).

These cables carry enough power from the ship's gas turbines and diesel generators to run a town the size of Swindon (or 9,100 homes) or seven million energy-saving light bulbs (as it is, there are 'only' 28,000 light bulbs aboard).

Of course, all these statistics, all these Top Trumps facts mean nothing without the most important assets to HM Ships Queen Elizabeth and Prince of Wales: the people.

There will be a ship's company of 682 (that's some 40 fewer than the present flagship, HMS Ark Royal – in a ship three times Ark's size).

Indeed, the Queen Elizabeth class has been designed to be the most lean-manned warships built. While a US Nimitz-class carrier displaces 30 tonnes for every member of the ship's company, on the Queen Elizabeth, that figure is 115.

With a tailored air group aboard, the number of souls aboard can rise to in excess of 1,600 (there are 1,630 bunks on the ships).

To cater for their needs, the ship's plants will produce 319,000 litres of fresh water daily – that's enough to fill an Olympic-sized swimming pool.

When it comes to operations, the striking potency of each of the two ships is at least double that of their predecessors.

Up to 40 aircraft – twice as

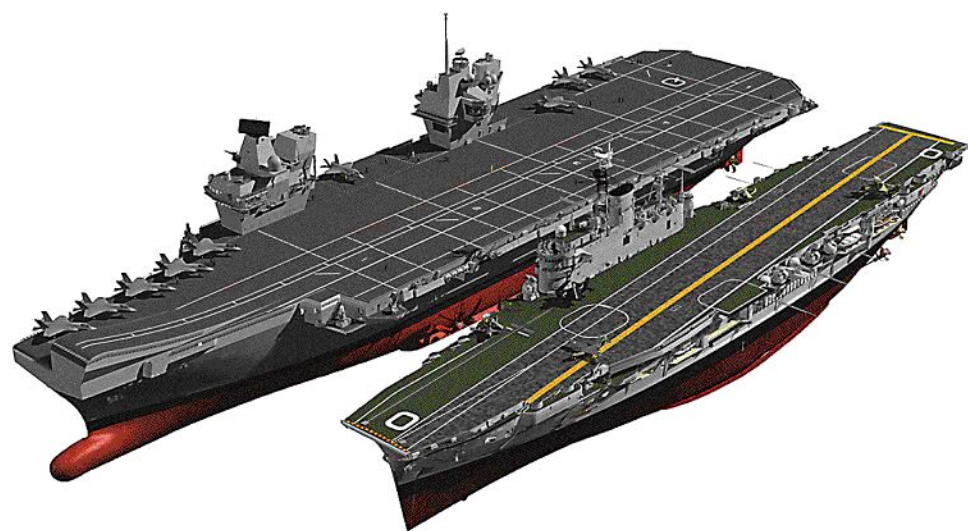
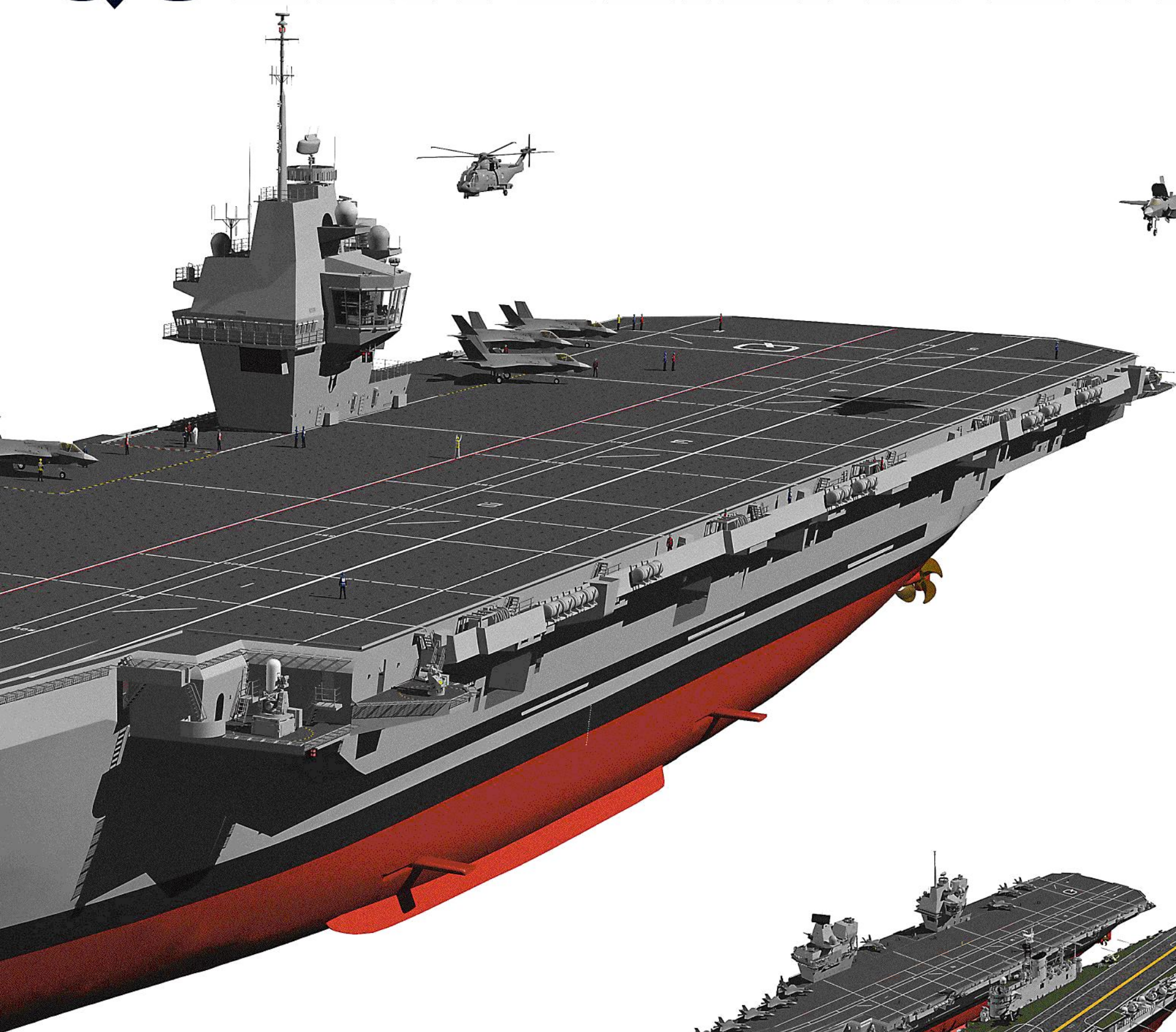
Facts and figures

Class: Queen Elizabeth-class
Pennant number: R08 (Queen Elizabeth)
Motto: *semper eadem* – always the same
Slogan: *diem – I serve* (Prince of Wales)
Builder: Aircraft Carrier Alliance
Laid down: July 7 2009
Expected in-service dates: 2015 (Queen Elizabeth), 2016 (Prince of Wales)
Displacement: 65,000 tons
Length: 920ft (280m)
Beam: 230ft (70m)
Draught: 36ft (11m)
Speed: 25+ knots
Complement: 682 (up to 1,600)
Propulsion: 2 x Rolls-Royce MTI generator sets producing a total of 100,000 kW
Range: 8,000-10,000 nautical miles
Armament: Phalanx automated 30mm guns and mini-guns to protect against anti-air warfare
Aircraft: Tailored air group of up to 40 aircraft, including F35B Lightning II, F35B Lightning II, and helicopters

Battle Honours

Dardanelles.....	1915
Crete.....	1941
Sabang.....	1944
Burma.....	1944-45
East Indies.....	1945

QUEEN ELIZABETH



● Queen Elizabeth dwarfs the 43,000-ton HMS Ark Royal IV – Britain's last traditional aircraft carrier

and figures

Elizabeth), R09 (Prince of Wales)
the same (Queen Elizabeth); ich

6 (Queen Elizabeth), 2018

with embarked air group)
30 gas turbines and 4 x diesel
tal of 110MWe
iles
close-in weapons systems,
counter sea borne threats
to 40 aircraft: initially Harrier
plus Merlin and Chinook

many as on HMS Ark Royal or Illustrious – can be embarked as part of a Tailored Air Group.

The fixed wing punch will be provided initially by Harrier GR9s until the F35B Lightning II enters service (its payload is twice that of a Harrier); rotary wing power will be provided principally by Merlins, but given their size and versatility the ships are more than capable of handling Chinooks and future unmanned aerial vehicles.

Forward and aft lifts can shift the aircraft from the flight deck to hangar deck in under 60 seconds. They could also lift the entire combined weight of every man and woman on board.

As befits the nation's flagships it has taken a national effort to create these two leviathans under the banner of the Aircraft Carrier Alliance – a partnership between industry and the MOD.

More than 90 firms are providing parts and equipment

from Peterhead on the north-east coast of Scotland to the shores of north and south Devon.

Work on HMS Queen Elizabeth began in Appledore's yard in late 2008 with the first steel formally being cut at BAE Systems' yard at Govan in July 2009. In all, the two vessels will use 80,000 tonnes of steel – that's three times as much as was required by the re-built Wembley Stadium.

In all, six yards are constructing sections of the warships: Babcock's works at Rosyth and Appledore, A&P in Newcastle, Cammell Laird in Birkenhead and BAE Systems' yards in Portsmouth and on the Clyde.

The ships are being pieced together at Rosyth dockyard, where an existing dry dock has been expanded to accommodate the leviathans.

At the peak of construction, over 7,000 shipwrights, engineers, electricians, designers, computer experts and ancillary staff will

toil on the two ships in the main yards. A further 2,000-plus people are expected to support the effort in the supply chain.

On current plans, their work should be completed on Queen Elizabeth by 2016. Her sister is expected to be completed two years later. They are expected to fly the White Ensign for up to 50 years apiece.

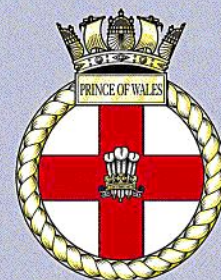
The carriers draw their titles from two of the proudest titles in Royal Navy history.

Although only one previous warship has carried the name Queen Elizabeth – a 1913 battleship which served with distinction in both of the 20th Century's global conflagrations, notably the Mediterranean and Far East – there have been more than 20 ships to bear the name Elizabeth, tracing their lineage back to the 16th Century. That proud line has earned battle honours from the Armada in 1588 to Guadeloupe in 1810.

Eight British warships have been named after the heir to the throne, beginning with a French privateer which was commissioned by the ex-King James and captured by HMS York in 1693. Armed with 14 guns, she was pressed into service as the first Prince of Wales.

The name continued through the ages of sail and steam to the pre-dreadnought Prince of Wales which served in the Mediterranean and Dardanelles, and to the most famous forebear, the King George V-class battleship.

In a career lasting not 11 months, the battleship had engaged, wounded – and been wounded by – Hitler's flagship Bismarck, carried Churchill to a meeting with President Roosevelt in Newfoundland, and escorted a Malta convoy, downing several Italian aircraft in the process. She succumbed to Japanese air assault on December 10 1941 off Malaysia.



St Lucia.....1778
Groix Island.....1795
Dardanelles.....1915
Bismarck.....1941
Malta Convoys.....1941

Battle Honours